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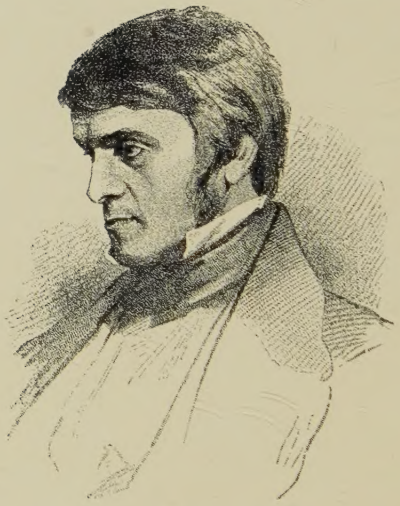

THOMAS CARLYLE.

ÆT. 50.

From a Drawing by the late Samuel Lawrence, in the possession of Lady Ashburton.

THOMAS CARLYLE

A HISTORY OF HIS LIFE IN LONDON

1834–1881

BY

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

WITH PORTRAIT

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

NEW IMPRESSION

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CARLYLE'S LIFE IN LONDON.

INTRODUCTORY.

In Carlyle's Journal I find written, on the 10th of October, 1843, the following words:—

Some one writes about 'notes for a biography' in some beggarly 'Spirit of the Age' or other rubbish basket—rejected *nem. con.* What have I to do with their 'Spirits of the Age'? To have my 'life' surveyed and commented on by all men even wisely is no object with me, but rather the opposite; how much less to have it done *unwisely!* The world has no business with my life; the world will never know my life, if it should write and read a hundred biographies of me. The main facts of it even are known, and are likely to be known, to myself alone of created men. The 'goose goddess' which they call 'Fame'! *Ach Gott!*

And again, December 29, 1848:—

Darwin said to Jane the other day, in his quizzing serious manner, 'Who will write Carlyle's life?' The word reported to me set me thinking how *impossible* it was, and would for ever remain, for any creature to write my 'life.' The chief elements of my little destiny have all along lain deep below

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view or surmise, and never will or can be known to any son of Adam. I would say to my biographer, if any fool undertook such a task, 'Forbear, poor fool! Let no life of me be written; let me and my bewildered wrestlings lie buried here and be forgotten swiftly of all the world. If thou write, it will be mere delusion and hallucination. The confused world never understood nor will understand me and my poor affairs. Not even the persons nearest to me could guess at them; nor was it found indispensable; nor is it now (for any but an idle purpose) profitable, were it even possible. Silence, and go thy ways elsewhither.'

Reluctantly, and only when he found that his wishes would not and could not be respected, Carlyle requested me to undertake the task which he had thus described as hopeless; and placed materials in my hands which would make the creation of a true likeness of him, if still difficult, yet no longer as impossible as he had declared it to be. Higher confidence was never placed by any man in another. I had not sought it, but I did not refuse to accept it. I felt myself only more strictly bound than men in such circumstances usually are, to discharge the duty which I was undertaking with the fidelity which I knew to be expected from me. Had I considered my own comfort or my own interest, I should have sifted out or passed lightly over the delicate features in the story. It would have been as easy as it would have been agreeable for me to construct a picture, with every detail strictly accurate, of an almost perfect character. An account so written would have been read with immediate pleasure. Carlyle would have been admired and applauded, and the biographer,

if he had not shared in the praise, would at least have escaped censure. He would have followed in the track marked out for him by a custom which is all but universal. When a popular statesman dies, or a popular soldier or clergyman, his faults are forgotten, his virtues only are remembered in his epitaph. Everyone has some frailties, but the merits and not the frailties are what interest the world; and with great men of the ordinary kind whose names and influence will not survive their own generation, to leave out the shadow, and record solely what is bright and attractive, is not only permissible, but is a right and honourable instinct. The good should be frankly acknowledged with no churlish qualifications.

But the pleasure which we feel, and the honour which we seek to confer, are avenged, wherever truth is concealed, in the case of the exceptional few who are to become historical and belong to the immortals. The sharpest scrutiny is the condition of enduring fame. Every circumstance which can be ascertained about them is eventually dragged into light. If blank spaces are left, they are filled by rumour or conjecture. When the generation which knew them is gone, there is no more tenderness in dealing with them; and if their friends have been indiscreetly reserved, idle tales which survive in tradition become stereotyped into facts. Thus the characters of many of our greatest men, as they stand in history, are left blackened by groundless calumnies, or credited with imaginary excellences, a prey to be torn in pieces by rival critics, with clear evidence wanting, and prepossessions fixed on one side or the other by dislike or sympathy.

Had I taken the course which the 'natural man' would have recommended, I should have given no faithful account of Carlyle. I should have created a 'delusion and a hallucination' of the precise kind which he who was the truest of men most deprecated and dreaded; and I should have done it not innocently and in ignorance, but with deliberate insincerity, after my attention had been specially directed by his own generous openness to the points which I should have left unnoticed. I should have been unjust first to myself—for I should have failed in what I knew to be my duty as a biographer. I should have been unjust secondly to the public. Carlyle exerted for many years an almost unbounded influence on the mind of educated England. His writings are now spread over the whole English-speaking world. They are studied with eagerness and confidence by millions who have looked and look to him not for amusement, but for moral guidance, and those millions have a right to know what manner of man he really was. It may be, and I for one think it will be, that when time has levelled accidental distinctions, when the perspective has altered, and the foremost figures of this century are seen in their true proportions, Carlyle will tower far above all his contemporaries, and will then be the one person of them about whom the coming generations will care most to be informed. But whether I estimate his importance rightly or wrongly, he has played a part which entitles everyone to demand a complete account of his character. He has come forward as a teacher of mankind. He has claimed 'to speak with authority and not as the Scribes.' He has denounced as empty illusion the most favourite

convictions of the age. No concealment is permissible about a man who could thus take on himself the character of a prophet and speak to it in so imperious a tone.

Lastly, I should have been unjust to Carlyle himself and to everyone who believed and has believed in him. To have been reticent would have implied that there was something to hide, and, taking Carlyle all in all, there never was a man—I at least never knew of one—whose conduct in life would better bear the fiercest light which can be thrown upon it. In the grave matters of the law he walked for eighty-five years unblemished by a single moral spot. There are no 'sins of youth' to be apologised for. In no instance did he ever deviate even for a moment from the strictest lines of integrity. He had his own way to make in life, and when he had chosen his profession, he had to depend on popularity for the bread which he was to eat. But although more than once he was within sight of starvation he would never do less than his very best. He never wrote an idle word, he never wrote or spoke any single sentence which he did not with his whole heart believe to be true. Conscious though he was that he had talents above those of common men, he sought neither rank nor fortune for himself. When he became famous and moved as an equal among the great of the land, he was content to earn the wages of an artisan, and kept to the simple habits in which he had been bred in his father's house. He might have had a pension had he stooped to ask for it; but he chose to maintain himself by his own industry, and when a pension was offered him it was declined. He

despised luxury; he was thrifty and even severe in the economy of his own household; but in the times of his greatest poverty he had always something to spare for those who were dear to him. When money came at last, and it came only when he was old and infirm, he added nothing to his own comforts, but was lavishly generous with it to others. Tender-hearted and affectionate he was beyond all men whom I have ever known. His faults, which in his late remorse he exaggerated, as men of noblest natures are most apt to do, his impatience, his irritability, his singular melancholy, which made him at times distressing as a companion, were the effects of temperament first, and of a peculiarly sensitive organisation; and secondly of absorption in his work and of his determination to do that work as well as it could possibly be done. Such faults as these were but as the vapours which hang about a mountain, inseparable from the nature of the man. They have to be told because without them his character cannot be understood, and because they affected others as well as himself. But they do not blemish the essential greatness of his character, and when he is fully known he will not be loved or admired the less because he had infirmities like the rest of us. Carlyle's was not the imperious grandeur which has risen superior to weakness and reigns cold and impassive in distant majesty. The fire in his soul burnt red to the end, and sparks flew from it which fell hot on those about him, not always pleasant, not always hitting the right spot or the right person; but it was pure fire notwithstanding, fire of genuine and noble passion, of genuine love for all that was good, and

genuine indignation at what was mean or base or contemptible. His life was not a happy one, and there were features in it for which, as he looked back, he bitterly reproached himself. But there are many, perhaps the majority of us, who sin deeper every day of their lives in these very points in which Carlyle sinned, and without Carlyle's excuses, who do not know that they have anything to repent of. The more completely it is understood, the more his character will be seen to answer to his intellectual teaching. The one is the counterpart of the other. There was no falsehood and there was no concealment in him. The same true nature showed itself in his life and in his words. He acted as he spoke from his heart, and those who have admired his writings will equally admire himself when they see him in his actual likeness.

I, for myself, concluded, though not till after long hesitation, that there should be no reserve, and therefore I have practised none. I have published his own autobiographical fragments. I have published an account of his early years from his Letters and Journals. I have published the Letters and Memorials of his wife which describe (from one aspect) his life in London as long as she remained with him. I supposed for a time that if to these I added my personal recollections of him, my task would be sufficiently accomplished; but I have thought it better on longer consideration to complete his biography as I began it. He himself quotes a saying of Goethe that on the lives of remarkable men ink and paper should least be spared. I must leave no materials unused to complete the portrait which I attempt to draw.

CHAPTER I.

A.D. 1834. ÆT. 39.

Beginning of life in Cheyne Row—First winter in London—John Sterling—Offers of employment on the 'Times' not accepted, and why—Begins 'History of the French Revolution'—Carlyle's interpretation of it—Extracts from Journal—London society—Literature as a profession—John Mill—The burnt manuscript—Resolution to continue the book—Meets Wordsworth.

In the summer of 1834 Carlyle left Craigenputtock and its solitary moors and removed to London, there to make a last experiment whether it would be possible for him to abide by literature as a profession, or whether he must seek another employment and perhaps another country. I have already told how he set up his modest establishment in Cheyne Row in the house where he was to remain till he died. He had some 200*l.* in money for immediate necessities; of distinct prospects he had none at all. He had made a reputation by his articles in reviews as a man of marked ability. He had been well received on his visit to London in 1832, and was an object of admiring interest to a number of young men who were themselves afterwards to become famous, to John Mill, to Charles Buller, to Charles Austin, Sir William Molesworth, and the advanced section of the Philosophic Radicals, and he doubtless hoped that when he was seen and more widely known, some editorship, secretaryship, or analogous employ-

ment might fall in his way, which would enable him to live. Even Brougham and Macaulay and the orthodox Whigs of the 'Edinburgh Review,' admitted his talents, though they disliked the use which he made of them, and would have taken him up and provided for him if he would have allowed Jeffrey to put him into harness. But harness it was impossible for him to wear, even harness as light as was required by booksellers and editors. They had wondered at him and tried him, but since the appearance of 'Sartor' they had turned their backs upon him as hopeless, and had closed in his face the door of periodical literature. He was impracticable, unpersuadable, unmalleable, as independent and wilful as if he were an eldest son and the heir of a peerage. He had created no 'public' of his own; the public which existed could not understand his writings and would not buy them, nor could he be induced so much as to attempt to please it; and thus it was that in Cheyne Row he was more neglected than he had been in Scotland. No one seemed to want his services, no one applied to him for contributions. At the Bullers' house, at the Austins', and in a gradually increasing circle, he went into society and was stared at as if he were a strange wild animal. His conversational powers were extraordinary. His unsparing veracity, his singular insight, struck everyone who came in contact with him, but were more startling than agreeable. He was unobtrusive, but when asked for his opinion he gave it in his metaphoric manner, and when contradicted was contemptuous and overbearing, 'too sarcastic for so young a man,' too sarcastic by far for the vanity of those whom he mortified. A

worse fault was that he refused to attach himself to any existing sect, either religious or political. He abhorred cant in all its forms, and as cant in some shape gathers about every organised body of English opinion, he made many enemies and few friends; and those few, fearful of the consequences, were shy of confessing themselves his disciples. Month after month went by, and no opening presented itself of which he was able to avail himself. Molesworth founded a 'Radical Review,' but the management of it was not offered to Carlyle, though he hoped it might be offered. His money flowed away, and with the end of it would end also the prospect of making a livelihood in London.

I said no opening of which he could avail himself, but one opening there was which if he had chosen would have led him on to fortune, and which any one but Carlyle would have grasped at. In the small number of men who had studied 'Sartor' seriously, and had discovered the golden veins in that rugged quartz rock, was John Sterling, then fresh from Cambridge and newly ordained a clergyman, of vehement but most noble nature, who though far from agreeing with Carlyle, though shrinking from and even hating, so impetuous was he, many of Carlyle's opinions, yet saw also that he was a man like none that he had yet fallen in with, a man not only brilliantly gifted, but differing from the common run of people in this, that he would not lie, that he would not equivocate, that he would say always what he actually thought, careless whether he pleased or offended. Such a quality, rare always, and especially rare in those who are poor and unfriended, could not but recommend the possessor of

it to the brave and generous Sterling. He introduced Carlyle to his father, who was then the guiding genius of the 'Times;' and the great editor of the first periodical of the world offered Carlyle work there, of course on the implied conditions. When a man enlists in the army, his soul as well as his body belong to his commanding officer. He is to be no judge of the cause for which he has to fight. His enemies are chosen for him and not by himself. His duty is to obey orders and to ask no questions. Carlyle, though with poverty at his door, and entire penury visible in the near future, turned away from a proposal which might have tempted men who had less excuse for yielding to it. He was already the sworn soldier of another chief. His allegiance from first to last was to *truth*, truth as it presented itself to his own intellect and his own conscience. He could not, would not, advocate what he did not believe; he would not march in the same regiment with those who did advocate what he disbelieved; nor would he consent to suppress his own convictions when he chose to make them known. By this resolution not the 'Times' only, but the whole world of party life and party action, was necessarily closed against him. Organisation of any kind in free communities is only possible where individuals will forget their differences in general agreement. Carlyle, as he said himself, was fated to be an Ishmaelite, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him; and Ishmaelites, if they are to prosper at all in such a society as ours, and escape being trampled under the horses' hoofs, require better material resources behind them than a fast-shrinking capital of 200*l.*

One occupation, and one only, absorbed Carlyle's time and thought during these first years of his London life, the writing his history of the French Revolution. He had studied it at Craigenputtock. He had written as a preliminary flight, and as if to try his wings, the exquisite sketch of the episode of the Diamond Necklace, which lay in his desk still unpublished. He had written *round* the subject, on Voltaire, on Diderot, and on Cagliostro. The wild tornado in which the French monarchy perished had fascinated his attention, because it illustrated to him in all its features such theory as he had been able to form of the laws under which this world is ruled, and he had determined to throw it out of himself if afterwards he was to abandon literature for ever. His mind had been formed in his father's house upon the Old Testament and the Presbyterian creed, and, far as he had wandered and deeply as he had read, the original lesson had remained indelible.

To the Scotch people and to the Puritan part of the English, the Jewish history contained a faithful account of the dealings of God with man in all countries and in all ages. As long as men kept God's commandments it was well with them ; when they forgot God's commandments and followed after wealth and enjoyment, the wrath of God fell upon them. Commerce, manufactures, intellectual enlightenment, political liberty, outward pretences of religiosity, all that modern nations mean when they speak of wealth and progress and improvement, were but Moloch or Astarte in a new disguise, and now as then it was impossible to serve God and Baal. In some form or other retribution would come, wherever the hearts of men were set on material prosperity.

To this simple creed Carlyle adhered as the central principle of all his thoughts. The outward shell of it had broken. He had ceased to believe in miracles and supernatural interpositions. But to him the natural was the supernatural, and the tales of signs and wonders had risen out of the efforts of men to realise the deepest of truths to themselves. The Jewish history was the symbol of all history. All nations in all ages were under the same dispensation. We did not come into the world with rights which we were entitled to claim, but with duties which we were ordered to do. Rights men had none, save to be governed justly. Duties waited for them everywhere. Their business was to find what those duties were and faithfully fulfil them. So and only so the commonweal could prosper, only so would they be working in harmony with nature, only so would nature answer them with peace and happiness. Of forms of government, 'that which was best administered was best.' Any form would answer where there was justice between man and man. Constitutions, Bills of Rights, and such like were no substitutes for justice, and could not further justice, till men were themselves just. They must *seek first* God's kingdom, they must be loyally obedient to the law which was written in their consciences; or though miracles had ceased, or had never been, there were forces in the universe terrible as the thunders of Sinai or Assyrian armies, which would bring them to their senses or else destroy them. The French Revolution was the last and most signal example of 'God's revenge.' The world was not made that the rich might enjoy themselves while the poor toiled and suffered. On such terms

society itself was not allowed to exist. The film of habit on which it rested would burst through, and hunger and fury would rise up and bring to judgment the unhappy ones whose business it had been to guide and govern, when they had not guided and had not governed.

England and Scotland were not yet like France, yet doubtless these impressions in Carlyle had originated in scenes which he had himself witnessed. The years which had followed the great war had been a time of severe suffering, especially in the North. It had been borne on the whole with silent patience, but the fact remained that hundreds of thousands of labourers and artisans had been out of work and their families starving while bread had been made artificially dear by the corn laws; and the gentry meanwhile had collected their rents and shot their grouse and their partridges, with a deep unconsciousness that anything else was demanded of them. That such an arrangement was not just—that it was entirely contrary, for one thing, to what was taught in the religion which everyone professed to believe—had early become evident to Carlyle, and not to him only, but to those whose opinions he most respected. His father, though too wise a man to meddle in active politics, would sternly say that the existing state of things could not last and ought not to last. His mother, pious and devout though she was, yet was a fiery Radical to the end of her days. Radicalism lay in the blood of the Scotch Calvinists, a bitter inheritance from the Covenanters. Carlyle felt it all to his heart; but he had thought too long and knew too much to believe in the dreams of the Radicals of politics.

In them lay revolution, feasts of reason, and a reign of terror. Goethe had taught him the meaning and the worth of the apostles of freedom. They might destroy, but they could never build again. For the sick body and sick soul of modern Europe there was but one remedy, the old remedy of the Jewish prophets, repentance and moral amendment. All men, high and low, wise and unwise, must call back into their minds the meaning of the word 'duty;' must put away their cant and hypocrisy, their selfishness and appetite for pleasure, and speak truth and do justice. Without this, all tinkering of the constitution, all growth of wealth, though it rained ingots, would avail nothing.

France was the latest instance of the action of the general law. France of all modern nations had been the greatest sinner, and France had been brought to open judgment. She had been offered light at the Reformation, she would not have it, and it had returned upon her as lightning. She had murdered her Colignys. She had preferred to live for pleasure and intellectual enlightenment, with a sham for a religion, which she maintained and herself disbelieved. The palaces and châteaux had been distinguished, by the splendour of dissipation. The poor had asked for bread and had been scornfully told to eat grass. The Annandale masons in old James Carlyle's time had dined on grass in silence; the French peasantry had borne with the tyranny of their princes and seigneurs, patient as long as patience was possible, and submitting as sheep to be annually sheared for their masters' pleasure; but the duty of subjects and the duty of rulers answer one to the other, and the question, sooner or later inevitable

in such cases, began to be asked, what this aristocracy, these splendid units were, for whom thousands were sacrificed, these nobles who regarded the earth as their hunting ground, these priests who drew such lavish wages for teaching what they knew to be untrue—an ominous enquiry which is never made till fact has answered it already. False nobles, false priests, once detected, could not be allowed to remain. Unfortunately it did not occur to the French nation that when the false nobles and the false priests were shaken off they would need true nobles and true priests. The new creed rose, which has since become so popular, that every man can be his own ruler and his own teacher. The notion that one man was superior to another and had a right to lead or govern him was looked upon as a cunning fiction that had been submitted to for a time by credulity. All men were brothers of one family, born with the same inalienable right to freedom. The right had only to be acknowledged and respected, and the denial of it made treason to humanity, and Astræa would then return, and earth would be again a Paradise. This was the new Evangel. It was tried, and was tried with the guillotine as its minister, but no millennium arrived. The first article was false. Men were not equal, but infinitely unequal, and the attempt to build upon an untrue hypothesis could end only as all such attempts must end. The Revolution did not mean emancipation from authority, because the authority of the wise and good over fools and knaves was the first condition of natural human society. What it did mean was the bringing great offenders to justice, who for generation after generation had prospered in

iniquity. Crown, nobles, prelates, seigneurs, they and the lies which they had taught and fattened on were burnt up as by an eruption from the nether deep, and of them at least the weary world was made quit.

It was thus that Carlyle regarded the great convulsion which shook Europe at the close of the last century. He believed that the fate of France would be the fate of all nations whose hearts were set on material things—who for religion were content with decent unrealities, satisfying their consciences with outward professions—treating God as if he were indeed, in Milton's words, 'a buzzard idol.' God would not be mocked. The poor wretches called mankind lay in fact under a tremendous dispensation which would exact an account of them for their misdoings to the smallest fibre. Every folly, every false word, or unjust deed was a sin against the universe, of which the consequences would remain, though the guilt might be purged by repentance. The thought of these things was a weight upon his heart, and he could not rest till he was delivered of it. England just then was rushing along in the enthusiasm of Reform, and the warning was needed. His own future was a blank. He had no notion what was to become of him, how or where he was to live, on what he was to live. His immediate duty was to write down his convictions on this the greatest of all human problems, and 'the history of the French Revolution' was the shape in which these convictions crystallised.

Let the reader therefore picture Carlyle to himself, as settled down to this work within a few months after his arrival in London. He was now 39 years old, in the

prime of his intellectual strength. His condition, his feelings, his circumstances, and the outward elements of his life are noted down in the letters and journals from which I shall now make extracts. I will only ask the reader, as I must avoid repetition, to glance occasionally into the contemporary correspondence of Mrs. Carlyle, which will add particulars that are omitted in his own.

January 1, 1835.—Twelve o'clock has just struck, the last hour of 1834, the first of a new year. Bells ringing, to me dolefully; a wet wind blustering, my wife in bed, very unhappily ill of a foot which a puddle of a maid scalded three weeks ago; I, after a day of fruitless toil, reading and rereading about that Versailles 6th of October still. It is long since I have written anything here. The future looks too black round me, the present too doleful, unfriendly. I am too sick at heart, wearied, wasted in body, to complain even to myself. My first friend Edward Irving is dead—I am friendless here or as good as that. My book cannot get on, though I stick to it like a burr. Why should I say 'Peace, peace,' where there is no peace? May God grant me strength to do, or to endure as a right, what is appointed me in this now commenced division of time. Let me not despair. Nay, I do not in general. Enough to-night, for I am *done*. Peace be to my mother, and all my loved ones that yet live. What a noisy inanity is this world!

February 7.—The first book of the 'French Revolution' is finished.[1] . . . Soul and body both very *sick*. Yet I have a kind of sacred defiance, *trotzend dem Schicksal*. It has become clear to me that I have honestly more force and

[1] This *first book* was the original first *volume*. The arrangement was afterwards altered.

faculty in me than belongs to the most I see. Also it was always clear that no honestly exerted force can be utterly lost. Were it long years after I am dead, in regions far distant from this, under names far different from thine, the seed thou sowest *will* spring. The great difficulty is to keep oneself in right balance, not despondent, not exasperated, defiant, free and clear. Oh for faith! Food and raiment thou hast never lacked yet and shalt not.

Nevertheless it is now some three-and-twenty months since I have earned one penny by the craft of literature. Be this recorded as a fact and document for the literary history of this time. I have been ready to work, I am abler than ever to work, know no fault I have committed; and yet so it stands. To *ask* able editors to employ you will not improve but worsen matters. You are like a spinster waiting to be married. I have some serious thoughts of quitting this 'Periodical' craft one good time for all. It is not synonymous with a life of wisdom. When want is approaching, one must have done with whims. If literature will refuse me both bread and a stomach to digest bread, then surely the case is growing clear.

Emerson from America invites me in the most enthusiastic terms to come thither and lecture. I thank him, and at least ask explanatory light. . . . Thanks to thrift and my good Scotch wife, we can hold out many months yet. *Voyons!* Met Radicals, &c., at Mrs. Buller's a week ago. Roebuck Robespierre was there, an acrid, sandy, barren character, dissonant-speaking, dogmatic, trivial, with a singular exasperation; restlessness as of diseased vanity written over his face when you come near it. I do not think him even equal to Robespierre, nor is it likely that a game of that sort will be played so soon again. *Aus dem wird wenig.* Sir William Molesworth, with the air of a good roystering schoolboy, pleased me considerably more. A man of *rank* can still do

this, forget his rank wholly, and be the sooner esteemed for having the mind equal to doing that.

February 8, 1835.—Vernal weather of all kinds, soft and hard, moist western and clear north-eastern, to me most *memorative*. Old days at Mainhill, Hoddam Hill, and earlier, come vividly back full of sad beauty which, while passing, they had not. Why is the past so beautiful? The element of *fear* is withdrawn from it for one thing. That is all safe, while the present and future are all so dangerous. 'Moonlight of memory'—a poetic phrase of Richter's. Also 'the limbs of my buried ones touched cold on my soul.' There are yet few days in which I do not meet on the streets some face that recalls my sister Margaret's, and reminds me that *she* is not suffering, but silent, asleep, in the Ecclefechan kirkyard; her *life*, her *self*, where God willed. What a miracle is all existence! Last night at Taylor's by myself; I, against my will, the main talker; learned nothing, enjoyed little; the tribes of Westminster, all on the late streets, making their Saturday markets, quite a new scene to me.

February 26, 1835.—Went last night, in wet bad weather, to Taylor's to meet Southey, who received me kindly. A lean, grey, whiteheaded man of dusky complexion, unexpectedly tall when he rises and still leaner then—the shallowest chin, prominent snubbed Roman nose, small carelined brow, huge bush of white grey hair on high crown and projecting on all sides, the most vehement pair of faint hazel eyes I have ever seen—a well-read, honest, limited (strait-laced even) kindly-hearted, most irritable man. We parted kindly, with no great purpose on either side, I imagine, to meet again. Southey believes in the Church of England. This is notable: notable and honourable that he has made such belief serve him so well.

Letter from Alick yesterday with a postscript from my mother. Jack also has written to me. Properly at this

time there is nothing comfortable to me in my existence but the getting on with that book and the love of some beloved ones mostly far from me.

Allein und abgetrennt von aller Freude! I repeated this morning. Yet thou canst write. Write then and complain of nothing—defy all things. The book announced yesterday. Would that I were further on with it! I ought to be done when Jack appoints to arrive, which I hope he will soon. He is one of my chief comforts. To work at the *Fête des Piques.*

'Jack' and 'Alick' were Carlyle's two brothers, John and Alexander. Alexander, who had been his companion at Craigenputtock, was struggling, not very successfully, with a farm near Lockerbie. John, who had been so long an object of expense and anxiety, was now, thanks to Jeffrey, in easy circumstances, living as travelling physician to Lady Clare, and with a handsome income which he was eager to share with his brother, as his brother had before shared with him his own narrow earnings and his moorland home. The contest of generosity was a very pretty one. Carlyle could never accept these offers, so independent and proud he was, and yet he reproached himself sometimes for having denied John so great a pleasure. John was the one person from whom he could have accepted an obligation, and if the worst came he had resolved that John should help him. But the occasion had not arrived yet, and the brothers continued to correspond with perfect unreserve and the old effusiveness of detail.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: January 12, 1835.

Your letters, my dear Jack, are always a great comfort to me. With your brotherly affection and true-heartedness, you are one of the best possessions I have. . . . Be certain I will share if need be. It were poor pride to resolve otherwise. With you alone of men such a thing were possible. Nay, it is to you only I can so much as complain. My true Annandalians would but in vain afflict themselves with my cares. Other heart there is none in the world that would even very honestly do that. My friends here admit cheerfully that I am a very heroic man, that must understand the art, unknown to them, *of living upon nothing*. Mill, I think, alone of them, would make any great effort to help me. . . . As to *heroism* (bless the mark!), I think often of the old rhyme:

> There was a piper had a cow,
> And he had naught to give her;
> He took his pipes and played a spring,
> And bade the cow consider.
> The cow considered wi' hersel'
> That piping ne'er would fill her;
> 'Gie me a peck o' oaten strae,
> And sell your wind for siller.'

In a word, my prospects here are not sensibly brightening; if it be not in this, that the longer I live among this people, the deeper grows my feeling (not a vain one—a sad one) of natural superiority over them; of being able (were the tools in my hand) to do a hundred things better than the hundred I see paid for doing them. In bright days I say it is *impossible*, but I must by-and-by strike into something. In dark days I say, 'and suppose nothing?' My sentiment is a kind of sacred defiance of the whole matter.

In this humour I write my book, without hope of it, except of being *done with it*, properly beginning to as good as feel that literature has gone mad in this country, and will not yield food to any honest cultivator of it. For example: if this book ever prospers, the issue will be applications in mad superabundance from able editors to write articles for them (with my heart's blood, as you sympathetically say) for perhaps *six* months—then a total cessation. Though I myself were able to write articles for ever, that is nothing. They are off after '*any* new thing,' and you stand wondering alone on the beach. As to 'fame' again, and 'distinguished' men, I declare to thee, Jack, a 'distinguished man' (but above all things a distinguished woman) is a character I had rather not see; and 'fame' with such miserable cobwebs as gain it most, and are burnt up by it, is heartily worth *nothing* to me.

Nay, sometimes, with pious thought, I feel it a mercy that I have it not. Who knows whether it would not calcine me too—drive me, too, mad? Literature does not invite me. Sometimes I say to myself, Surely friend, Providence, if ever it did warn, warns thee to have done with literature, which will never yield thee bread, nor stomach to digest bread.

Mrs. Carlyle adds a postscript:

My dear Brother,—Your affectionate letter is the greatest comfort we have had this new year. Otherwise it has been a rather detestable one. I said to Carlyle some weeks ago, 'I am resolved to make a little fun this Christmas, for our Christmases for a long while back have been so doleful.' 'I shall be particularly delighted,' said he, 'if you can realise any fun.' Well, the next morning, at breakfast, my maid poured a quantity of boiling water on my foot, in consequence of which, and I think also of improper applications, I have

been confined to the house five weeks, the most of that time indebted to Carlyle for carrying me out of one room into another.

Mrs. —— wrote me a sentimental effusion on the death of Edward Irving, threatening as heretofore to come and see me, but has not been yet, nor will not. The only pity is that she will not let the matter lie quite dormant.

There is a Mrs. X. whom I could really love, if it were safe and she was willing; but she is a dangerous-looking woman, and no useful relation can spring up between us. In short, my dear doctor, I am hardly better off for society than at Craig-o-putta: not so well off as when you were there walking with me and reading Ariosto.

Hard as he was working, Carlyle never ceased to look about for any kind of employment outside literature. His circumstances made it a duty for him to try, vain as every effort proved; and one scheme after another rises and fades in his correspondence.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: February 16, 1835.

The honest task, which I thank God is henceforth not so obscure to me, I will study to do. The talent which God has given me shall not rust unused. But must booksellers, able editors, and the glar[1] company of suchlike individuals be a new set of middlemen between me and my task? I positively do not care that periodical literature shuts her fist against me in these months. Let her keep it shut for ever, and go to the devil, which she mostly belongs to. The matter had better be brought to a crisis. There is perhaps a finger of Providence in it. . . . The secret of the whole matter is *froth*

[1] See note, p. 305.

and grounds itself in bubbles and unreality. The inference seems to be 'Walk out of this;' if even into the knapping of stones, which is a reality. We will do nothing rashly, but have our eyes open and study to do all things fitly. My only new scheme, since last letter, is a hypothesis—little more yet—about National Education. The newspapers had an advertisement about a Glasgow 'Educational Association' which wants a man that would found a Normal School, first going over England and into Germany to get light on that matter. I wrote to that Glasgow Association afar off, enquiring who they were, what manner of man they expected, testifying myself very friendly to their project, and so forth —no answer as yet. It is likely they will want, as Jane says, a 'Chalmers and Welsh' kind of character, in which case *Va ben, felice notte.* If otherwise, and they (almost by miracle) had the heart, I am the man for them. Perhaps my name is so heterodox in that circle, I shall not hear at all. . . . If I stir in any public matter, it must be in this (of national education). Radicalism goes on as fast as any sane mortal could wish it, without help of mine. Conservatism I cannot attempt to conserve, believing it to be a portentous embodied sham, accursed of God, and doomed to destruction, as all lies are; but woe the while if the people are not taught; if not their wisdom, then their brutish folly will incarnate itself into the frightfullest reality.

My grand immediate concern is to get the 'French Revolution' done. . . . I cannot tell thee what I think of the book. It is certainly better some ways than any I have hitherto written; contains no falsehood, singularity, or triviality that I can help; has probably no chance of being liked by any existing class of British men. Nevertheless, I toil on, searching diligently, doing what I can, in old Samuel's faith that 'useful diligence will at last prevail.' . . . Mill is very friendly. He is the nearest approach to a real man that I find here—

nay, as far as negativeness goes, he *is* that man, but unhappily not very satisfactory much farther. It is next to an impossibility that a London-born man should not be a stunted one. Most of them, as Hunt, are dwarfed and dislocated into the merest imbecilities. Mill is a Presbyterian's grandson, or he were that too. Glory to John Knox! Our isle never saw his fellow.

Letters seldom went to John without a few words from Mrs. Carlyle. She adds:

Dearest of created doctors,—I would fain cull a few flowers to make thee a dainty postscript, but the soil, alas! only yields dry thistles, for I am in 'the pipeclay state,' as Carlyle has designated a state too common with those who are too well furnished with bile. I went the other day, distracted that I was, to a great modern fashionable horrible dinner. It was at Mrs. ——'s. There was huge venison to be eaten, and new service of plate to be displayed, and Mrs. —— talked about the *Aarts* (Arts), and the great Sir John R—— favoured us with 'idears' on the Peel administration; and next day my head ached, and I was ready to imprecate the fire of heaven on the original inventor of a modern 'dinner.' We are going to-morrow to Mrs. X.'s, whom I would like that you knew, and could tell me whether to fall desperately in love with or no.

So Carlyle's first winter in London was passing away. His prospects were blank, and the society in which he moved gave him no particular pleasure, but it was good of its kind, and was perhaps more agreeable to him than he knew. His money would hold out till the book was done at the rate at which it was progressing. The first volume was finished. On the whole he was not dissatisfied with it. It was the best that he could do,

and he was, for him, in moderately fair spirits. But the strain was sharp; his 'labour-pains' with his books were always severe. He had first to see that the material was pure, with no dross of lies in it, and then to fuse it all into white heat before it would run into the mould, and he was in no condition to bear any fresh burden. Alas for him, he had a stern taskmistress. Providence or destiny (he himself always believed in Providence, without reason as he admitted, or even against reason) meant to try him to the utmost. Not only was all employment closed in his face, save what he could make for himself, but it was as if something said 'Even this too you shall not do till we have proved your mettle to the last.' A catastrophe was to overtake him, which for a moment fairly broke his spirit, so cruel it seemed—for the moment, but for the moment only. It served in fact to show how admirably, though in little things so querulous and irritable, he could behave under real misfortunes.

John Mill, then his closest and most valuable friend, was ardently interested in the growth of the new book. He borrowed the manuscript as it was thrown off, that he might make notes and suggestions, either for Carlyle's use, or as material for an early review. The completed first volume was in his hands for this purpose, when one evening, the 6th of March, 1835, as Carlyle was sitting with his wife, 'after working all day like a nigger' at the Feast of Pikes, a rap was heard at the door, a hurried step came up the stairs, and Mill entered deadly pale, and at first unable to speak. 'Why, Mill,' said Carlyle, 'what ails ye, man? What is it?' Staggering, and supported by Carlyle's arm, Mill gasped out

to Mrs. Carlyle to go down and speak to some one who was in a carriage in the street. Both Carlyle and she thought that a thing which they had long feared must have actually happened, and that Mill had come to announce it and to take leave of them. So genuine was the alarm that the truth when it came out was a relief. Carlyle led his friend to a seat 'the very picture of desperation.' He then learnt in broken sentences that his manuscript, 'left out in too careless a manner after it had been read,' was, 'except four or five bits of leaves, irrevocably annihilated.' That was all, nothing worse; but it was ugly news enough, and the uglier the more the meaning of it was realised. Carlyle wrote always in a highly wrought quasi-automatic condition both of mind and nerves. He read till he was full of his subject. His notes, when they were done with, were thrown aside and destroyed; and of this unfortunate volume, which he had produced as if 'possessed' while he was about it, he could remember nothing. Not only were 'the fruits of five months of steadfast, occasionally excessive, and always sickly and painful toil' gone irretrievably, but the spirit in which he had worked seemed to have fled too, not to be recalled; worse than all, his work had been measured carefully against his resources, and the household purse might now be empty before the loss could be made good. The carriage and its occupant drove off—and it would have been better had Mill gone too after he had told his tale, for the forlorn pair wished to be alone together in the face of such a calamity. But Carlyle, whose first thought was of what Mill must be suffering, made light of it, and talked of indifferent things, and Mill stayed and talked

too—stayed, I believe, two hours. At length he left them. Mrs. Carlyle told me that the first words her husband uttered as the door closed were: 'Well, Mill, poor fellow, is terribly cut up; we must endeavour to hide from him how very serious this business is to us.'

He left us (Carlyle writes the next day in his Journal) in a relapsed state, one of the pitiablest. My dear wife has been very kind, and has become dearer to me. The night has been full of emotion, occasionally of sharp pain (something cutting or hard grasping me round the heart) occasionally with sweet consolations. I dreamt of my father and sister Margaret alive; yet all defaced with the sleepy stagnancy, swollen hebetude of the grave, and again dying in some strange rude country; a horrid dream, the painfullest too is when you wake first. But on the whole should I not thank the Unseen? For I was not driven out of composure, hardly for moments. 'Walk humbly with thy God.' How I longed for some psalm or prayer that I could have uttered, that my loved ones could have joined me in! But there was none. Silence had to be my language. This morning I have determined so far that I *can* still write *a* book on the French Revolution and will do it. Nay, our money will still suffice. It was my last throw, my *whole* staked in the monstrosity of this life—for too monstrous, incomprehensible, it has been to me. I will not *quit* the game while faculty is given me to try playing. I have written to Fraser to buy me a 'Biographie Universelle' (a kind of increasing the stake) and fresh paper: mean to huddle up the *Fête des Piques* and look farther what can be attempted.

Oh, that I had faith! Oh, that I had! Then were there nothing too hard or heavy for me. Cry silently to thy inmost heart to God for it. Surely He will give it thee. At all events, it is as if my invisible schoolmaster had torn my

copybook when I showed it, and said, 'No, boy! Thou must write it better.' What can I, sorrowing, do but obey—obey and think it the best? To work again; and, oh! may God be with me, for this earth is not friendly. On in His name! I was the nearest being *happy* sometimes these last few days that I have been for many months. My health is not so bad as it once was. I felt myself on firmish ground as to my work, and could forget all else. I will tell John, my mother, and Annandale *Getreuen*, but not till I feel under way again and can speak peace to them with the sorrow. To no other, I think, will I tell it, or more than allude to it.

The money part of the injury Mill was able to repair. He knew Carlyle's circumstances. He begged, and at last passionately entreated, Carlyle not to punish him by making him feel that he had occasioned real distress to friends whom he so much honoured; and he enclosed a cheque for 200*l*., the smallest sum which he thought that he could offer. Carlyle returned it; but, his financial condition requiring that he should lay his pride aside, he intimated that he would accept half, as representing the wages of five months' labour. To this Mill unwillingly consented. He sent a hundred pounds, and, so far as money went, Carlyle was in the same position as when he began to write. He was not aware till he tried it what difficulty he would find in replacing what had been destroyed; and he was able to write to his brother of what had happened, before he did try again, as of a thing which had ceased to distress him.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: March 23.

I was busy with vol. ii., toiling along with the heart of a

free Roman. Indeed, I know not how it was, I had not felt so clear and independent, sure of myself and of my task, for many long years. . . . There never in my life had come upon me any other *accident* of much moment ; but this I could not but feel to be a sore one. The thing was lost, and perhaps worse ; for I had not only forgotten all the structure of it, but the spirit it was written with was past. Only the general impression seemed to remain, and the recollection that I was on the whole satisfied with that, and could now hardly hope to equal it. Mill, whom I had to comfort and speak peace to, remained injudiciously enough till almost midnight ; and my poor dame and I had to sit talking of indifferent matters, and could not till then get our lament freely uttered. *She* was very good to me, and the thing did not beat us. That night was a hard one ; something from time to time tying me tight, as it were, all round the region of the heart, and strange dreams haunting me. However, I was not without good thoughts too, that came like healing life into me ; and I got it somewhat reasonably crushed down. . . . I have got back my spirits, and hope I shall go on tolerably. . . . I was for writing to you next day after it happened, but Jane suggested it would only grieve you till I could say it was in the way towards adjustment.

The image of the schoolboy whose copy had been torn up by the master had taken hold of Carlyle, for he repeated it in his letters. It was humble enough and touching, yet not without comfort, for it implied that he had a master who was interested in his work and meant it to be executed properly, and not an outcast orphan for whom no one cared. For Mill's sake the misadventure was not spoken of in London. Carlyle had been idle for a week or two till he could muster

strength to set to work again, and had gone into society as much as he could to distract himself. He was a frequent guest at Henry Taylor's, 'a good man,' he said, 'whose laugh reminds me of poor Irving's.' At Taylor's he had met Southey. Shortly after the accident he met Wordsworth at the same house.

I did not expect much (he said in a letter), but got mostly what I expected. The old man has a fine shrewdness and naturalness in his expression of face, a long Cumberland figure; one finds also a kind of *sincerity* in his speech. But for prolixity, thinness, endless dilution, it excels all the other speech I had heard from mortals. A genuine man, which is much, but also essentially a small genuine man. Nothing perhaps is sadder (of the glad kind) than the unbounded laudation of such a man, sad proof of the rarity of such. I fancy, however, he has fallen into the garrulity of age, and is not what he was; also that his environment and rural prophethood has hurt him much. He seems impatient that even Shakespeare should be admired. 'So much out of my own pocket.' The shake of hand he gives you is feckless, egotistical. I rather fancy he loves nothing in the world so much as one could wish. When I compare that man with a great man, alas! he is like dwindling into a contemptibility. Jean Paul, for example (neither was he great), could have worn him in a finger-ring.

And again:

Have seen Wordsworth, an old, very loquacious—indeed, quite prosing man, with a tint of naturalness, of sincere insight, nevertheless. He has been much spoiled; king of his company, unrecognised, and then adulated. Worth little now. A genuine kind of man, but intrinsically and extrinsi-

cally a *small* one, let them sing or say what they will. The languid way in which he gives you a handful of numb unresponsive fingers is very significant. It seems also rather to grieve him that you have any admiration for anybody but him. The style in which he, clipping, qualifying, and wearisomely questioning without answer, spoke of Burns and Shakespeare, finding or guessing that to me he was all too little in comparison, was melancholy to hear. No man that I ever met has given me less, has disappointed me less. My peace be with him, and a happy evening to his, on the whole, respectable life.

CHAPTER II.

A.D. 1835. ÆT. 40.

The first volume to be replaced—Poverty and depression—John Sterling—Maurice on the Articles—Sartor—Carlyle's theology—Style—Invitation to America—Thoughts of abandoning literature—Reflections in Hyde Park—Book to be finished—London drawing-rooms—First volume rewritten.

To resolve to rewrite the burnt volume was easier than to do it. The '*Fête des Piques*' at which Carlyle had been engaged was leisurely finished. He then turned back to the death of Louis XV., the most impressive passage in the whole book as he eventually finished it, but he found that it would not prosper with him.

'The accident had grown tolerable to me,' he says, 'sometimes almost looked indifferent. But now when I actually come to try if I can repair it, I want of all things humility, faith. It is a sore loss I have had, but well taken, I will firmly believe, might become a gain. The wages part of it does next to nothing for me. I might all but as well have gone without wages. However, it was only gigmanity [1] that hinted at that, to which I needed not give any ear.'

Wages, indeed, could only be useful to enable the

[1] Vulgar pride; a favourite phrase of Carlyle's, taken from Thurtell's trial

work to recover itself, but it seemed as if the mirror had been broken and the image irrevocably gone.

Miserable! (he enters in his notebook on the 10th of April). I can in no way get on with this wretched work of mine. For the last fortnight, moreover, there seems to have been a kind of conspiracy of people to ask us out, from every one of which expeditions, were it only to 'tea and no party,' I return lamed for the next day. My sight, inward and even outward, is all as if bedimmed. I grow desperate, but that profits not. Mrs. Somerville's rout the other night, from which I whisked out in about an hour! Mad as Bedlam is that whole matter!

There was no hope now of the promised summer holiday when John Carlyle was to come home from Italy, and the 'French Revolution' was to have been finished, and the brothers to have gone to Scotland together and settled their future plans in family council. Holidays were not now to be thought of, at least till the loss was made good. Then, as always when in real trouble, Carlyle faced his difficulties like a man.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: April 30.

I assure you my health is not bad nor worsening. I am yellow, indeed, and thin, and feel that a rest will be very welcome and beneficial. Nevertheless, I repeat, my health, though changed, is not worse than it was. I can walk further than I used to do. My spirits, if never high, are in general quiet. I have more and more a kind of hope I shall get well again before my life ends. With health and peace for one year, it seems to me often as if I could write a

better book than any there has been in this country for generations.

If it be God's ordering, I shall get well. If not, I hope I shall work on indomitably as I am. Beautiful is that of brave old Voss, and often comes in my mind : 'As the earth, now in azure sunshine seen of all the stars, now in dark tempests hidden, *holds on* her journey round the sun.' Good also is this that you give me : *Lass es um Dich wettern.* I really try to do so, and succeed. . . . Mill and I settled : he pleaded for 200*l.* or some intermediate sum. But I found we must stick by the rigorous calculation, and I took 100*l.* Since then I have seen almost less of Mill than before, nor am I sorry at it, *till this work be done.* There is an express agreement we are not to mention it till then. . . . I believe I might have plenty of work in his 'London Review' for a time, but pay shall not tempt me from the other duty. We shall be provided for one way or the other, independently of the devil. Indeed, it often strikes me as strange what an unspeakable composure I have got into about economics and money. It seems to me, I should not mind a jot if hard had come to hard, and they had *rouped* me out of house and hold, and the very shirt off my back. I should say, 'Be it so ; our course lies elsewhither then.' Forward, my boy ! let us go with God, towards what God has chosen us for. We have struggled on hitherto without taking the devil into partnership. The time that remains is short ; the eternity is long. My little *Heldinn* is ready to share any fortune with me. We will fear nothing but falling into the hands of the destroyer.

The household at Chelsea was never closer drawn together than in these times of trial. Mrs. Carlyle adds her usual postscript.

Dearest John,—Your letter not only raised our spirits at

the time, but has kept them raised ever since. Its good influence is traceable in the diminished yellow of my husband's face, and the accelerated speed of his writing. Bless you for it, and for the kind feelings which make you a brother well worth having—a man well worth loving. Surely we shall not quarrel any more after having ascertained in absence how well we like one another. Alas! surely we shall; for one of us at least is only 'a plain human creature,' liable to quarrel and do everything that is unwise. But we will do it as little as possible, and be good friends all the while at heart. The book is going to be a good book in spite of bad fortune, and what is lost is by no means to be looked on as wasted. What he faithfully did in it, and also what he magnanimously endured, remains for him and us, not to be annihilated. How we shall enjoy our visit to Scotland when the volume is redone! Shall we resume Ariosto where we left him? And the battledores are here, and more suitable ceilings. Much is more suitable. Heaven send you safe!

Carlyle was brave; his *Heldinn* cheering him with word and look, his brother strong upon his own feet and heartily affectionate. But he needed all that affection could do for him. The 'accelerated speed' slackened to slow, and then to no motion at all. He sat daily at his desk, but his imagination would not work. Early in May, for the days passed heavily, and he lost the count of them, he notes 'that at no period of his life had he ever felt more disconsolate, beaten down, and powerless than then;' as if it were 'simply impossible that his weariest and miserablest of tasks should ever be accomplished.' A man can rewrite what he has known; but he cannot rewrite what he has felt. Emotion forcibly recalled is artificial, and, un-

less spontaneous, is hateful. He laboured on 'with the feeling of a man swimming in a rarer and rarer element.' At length there was no element at all. 'My will,' he said, 'is not conquered, but my vacuum of element to swim in seems complete.' He locked up his papers, drove the subject out of his mind, and sat for a fortnight reading novels, English, French, German—anything that came to hand. 'In this determination,' he thought, 'there might be instruction for him.' It was the first of the kind that he had ever deliberately formed. He would keep up his heart. He would be idle, he would rest. He would try, if the word was not a mockery, to enjoy himself.

In this suspended condition he wrote several letters, one particularly to his mother, to relieve her anxieties about him.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: May 12, 1835.

You will learn without regret that I am idling for these last two days. My poor work, the dreariest I ever undertook, was getting more and more untoward on me. I began to feel that toil and effort not only did not perceptibly advance it, but was even, by disheartening and disgusting me, retarding it. . . . A man must not only be able to work, but to give over working. I have many times stood doggedly to work, but this is the first time I ever deliberately laid it down without finishing it. . . . It has given me very great trouble, this poor book; and Providence, in the shape of human mismanagement, sent me the severest check of all. However, I still trust to get it written sufficiently, and if thou even canst not write it (as I have said to myself in late days),

why then be content with that too. God's creation will get along exactly as it should do without the writing of it.

There are other proposals hovering about me, but not worth speaking of yet. The 'literary world' here is a thing which I have had no other course left me but to *defy* in the name of God; man's imagination can fancy few things madder; but me (if God will) it shall not madden; I will take a knapping hammer first.

Everything is confused here with the everlasting jabber of politics, in which I struggle altogether to hold my peace. The Radicals have made an enormous advance by this little Tory interregnum; it is not unlikely the Tories will try it one other time. They would even fight if they had anybody to fight for them. Meanwhile these poor Melbourne people will be obliged to walk on at a quicker pace than formerly (considerably against their will, I believe), with the Radical bayonets pricking them behind. And so, whether the Tories stay out, or whether they try to come in again, it will be all for the advance of Radicalism, which means *revolt* against innumerable things, and (as I construe it) dissolution and confusion at no great distance, and a darkness which no man can see through. Everybody, Radical and other, tells me that the condition of the poor people—is—improving. My astonishment was great at first, but I now look for nothing else than this 'improving daily.' 'Well, gentlemen,' I answered once, 'the poor, I think, will get up some day, and tell you how improved their condition is!' It seems to me the vainest jangling, this of the Peels and Russells, that ever the peaceful air was beaten into *dispeace* by. But we are used to it from of old. Leave it alone. Permit it while God permits it, and so for work and hope elsewhither.

Another effect of Carlyle's enforced period of idleness was that he saw more of his friends, and of one

especially, whose interest in himself had first amused and then attracted him. John Sterling, young, eager, enthusiastic, had been caught by the Radical epidemic on the spiritual side. Hating lies as much as Carlyle hated them, and plunging like a high-bred colt under the conventional harness of a clergyman, he believed, nevertheless, as many others then believed, that the Christian religion would again become the instrument of a great spiritual renovation. While the Tractarians were reviving mediævalism at Oxford, Sterling, Maurice, Julius Hare, and a circle of Cambridge liberals were looking to Luther, and through Luther to Neander and Schleiermacher, to bring 'revelation' into harmony with intellect, and restore its ascendency as a guide into a new era. Coleridge was the high priest of this new prospect for humanity. It was a beautiful hope, though not destined to be realised. Sterling, who was gifted beyond the rest, was among the first to see how much a movement of this kind must mean, if it meant anything at all. He had an instinctive sympathy with genius and earnestness wherever he found it. In the author of 'Sartor Resartus' he discovered these qualities, while his contemporaries were blind to them. I have already mentioned that he sought Carlyle's acquaintance, and procured him the offer of employment on the 'Times.' His admiration was not diminished when that offer was declined. He missed no opportunity of becoming more intimate with him, and he hoped that he might himself be the instrument of bringing Carlyle to a clearer faith. Carlyle, once better instructed in the great Christian verities, might become a second and a greater Knox.

'I have seen,' Carlyle writes in this same May, 'a good deal of this young clergyman (singular clergyman) during these two weeks, a sanguine light-loving man, of whom, to me, nothing but good seems likely to come; to himself unluckily a mixture of good and evil.' Of good and evil—for Carlyle, clearer-eyed than his friend, foresaw the consequences. Frederick Maurice, Sterling's brother-in-law, on the occasion of the agitation about subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, had written a pamphlet extremely characteristic of him, to show that subscription was not a bondage, as foolish people called it, but a deliverance from bondage; that the Articles properly read were the great charter of spiritual liberty and reasonable belief. Sterling lent the pamphlet to Carlyle, who examined it, respectfully recognising that 'an earnest man's earnest word was worth reading; but,' he said, 'my verdict lay in these lines of jingle, which I virtuously spared Sterling the sight of:—

> Thirty-nine English Articles,
> Ye wondrous little particles,
> Did God shape His universe really by you?
> In that case I swear it,
> And solemnly declare it,
> This logic of Maurice's is true.'[1]

Carlyle afterwards came to know Maurice, esteemed him, and personally liked him, as all his acquaintance did. But the 'verdict' was unchanged. As a thinker he found him confused, wearisome, and ineffectual; and he thought no better of the whole business in

[1] Slightly altered when printed in 'Past and Present.'

which he was engaged. An amalgam of 'Christian verities' and modern critical philosophy was, and could be nothing else but, poisonous insincerity. This same opinion in respectful language he had to convey to Sterling, if he was required to give one. But he never voluntarily introduced such subjects, and Sterling's anxiety to improve Carlyle was not limited to the circle of theology. Sterling was a cultivated and classical scholar; he was disturbed by Carlyle's style, which offended him as it offended the world. This style, which has been such a stone of stumbling, originated, he has often said to myself, in the old farmhouse at Annandale. The humour of it came from his mother. The form was his father's common mode of speech, and had been adopted by himself for its brevity and emphasis. He was aware of its singularity and feared that it might be mistaken for affectation, but it was a natural growth, with this merit among others, that it is the clearest of styles. No sentence leaves the reader in doubt of its meaning. Sterling's objections, however, had been vehement. Carlyle admitted that there was foundation for them, but defended himself.

To John Sterling.

Chelsea: June 4, 1835.

Your objections as to phraseology and style have good grounds to stand on. Many of them are considerations to which I myself was not blind, which there were unluckily no means of doing more than nodding to as one passed. A man has but a certain strength; imperfections cling to him, which if he wait till he have brushed off entirely, he will spin for

ever on his axis, advancing nowhither. Know thy thought —believe it—front heaven and earth with it, in whatsoever words nature and art have made readiest for thee. If one has thoughts not hitherto uttered in English books, I see nothing for it but you must use words *not* found there, must *make* words, with moderation and discretion of course. That I have not always done it *so* proves only that I was not strong enough, an accusation to which I, for one, will never plead not guilty. For the rest, pray that I may have more and more strength! Surely, too, as I said, all these *coal marks* of yours shall be duly considered for the first and even for the second time, and help me on my way. . . . But finally do you reckon this really a time for purism of style, or that style (mere dictionary style) has much to do with the worth or unworth of a book? I do not. With whole ragged battalions of Scott's novel Scotch, with Irish, German, French, and even newspaper Cockney (where literature is little other than a newspaper) storming in on us, and the whole structure of our Johnsonian English breaking up from its foundations, revolution *there* is visible as everywhere else.

'The style! ah, the style!' Carlyle notes nevertheless in his journal, as if he was uneasy about it; for in the 'French Revolution' the peculiarities of it were more marked than even in 'Sartor:'—

The poor people seem to think a style can be put off or put on, not like a skin but like a coat. Is not a skin verily a product and close kinsfellow of all that lies under it, exact type of the nature of the beast, not to be plucked off without flaying and death? The Public is an old woman. Let her maunder and mumble.

Sterling was not satisfied, and again persisted in his remonstrances. *Das wird zu lang*, Carlyle said; 'he made the letter into matches;' not loving his friend the less for advice which was faithfully given, but knowing in himself that he could not and ought not to attend to it. The *style* was and is the *skin*—an essential part of the living organisation.

But besides the style, Sterling had deeper complaints to make. He insisted on the defects of Carlyle's spiritual belief, being perhaps led on into the subject by the failure of Maurice's eloquence. 'Sartor' was still the text. It had been ridiculed when it first appeared in 'Fraser.' It had been republished and admired in America, but in England so far it had met with almost entire neglect. Why should this have been? It was obviously a remarkable book, the most remarkable perhaps which had been published for many years.

You ask (said Carlyle) why the leading minds of the country have given the Clothes philosophy no response? My good friend, not one of them has had the happiness of seeing it! It issued through one of the main cloacas (poor Fraser) of periodical literature, where no 'leading mind,' I fancy, looks if he can help it. The poor book cannot be destroyed by fire or other violence now, but solely by the general law of destiny; and *I* have nothing more to do with it henceforth. How it chanced that no bookseller would print it, in an epoch when Satan Montgomery runs, or seems to run, through thirteen editions, and the morning papers, on its issuing through the *cloaca*, sang together in mere discord over such a creation—this truly is a question, but a different one. Meanwhile do not suppose the poor book has

not been responded to; for the historical fact is, I could show very curious response to it here, not ungratifying, and fully three times as much as I counted on, or as the wretched farrago itself deserved.

Sterling, however, had found another reason for the comparative failure.

You say finally (Carlyle goes on), as the key to the whole mystery, that Teufelsdröckh does not believe in a 'personal God.' It is frankly said, with a friendly honesty for which I love you. A grave charge, nevertheless—an awful charge—to which, if I mistake not, the Professor, laying his hand on his heart, will reply with some gesture expressing the solemnest *denial*. In gesture rather than in speech, for the Highest *cannot* be spoken of in words. Personal! Impersonal! One! Three! *What* meaning can any mortal (after all) attach to them in reference to *such* an object? *Wer darf Ihn* NENNEN? I dare not and do not. That you dare and do (to some greater extent) is a matter I am far from taking offence at. Nay, with all sincerity, I can rejoice that you have a creed of that kind which gives you happy thoughts, nerves you for good actions, brings you into readier communion with many good men. My true wish is that such creed may long hold compactly together in you, and be 'a covert from the heat, a shelter from the storm, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' Well is it if we have a printed litany to pray from; and yet not *ill* if we *can* pray even in *silence;* for silence too is audible *there*. Finally assure yourself that I am neither Pagan nor Turk, nor circumcised Jew; but an unfortunate Christian individual resident at Chelsea in *this* year of grace, neither Pantheist, nor Pot-theist, nor any Theist or Ist whatsoever, having the most decided contempt for all such manner of system-builders

or sect-founders—as far as contempt may be compatible with so mild a nature—feeling well beforehand (taught by long experience) that all such are and ever must be *wrong*. By God's blessing one has got two eyes to look with, also a mind capable of knowing, of believing. That is all the creed I will at this time insist on. And now may I beg one thing: that whenever in my thoughts or your own you fall on any dogma that tends to estrange you from me, pray believe *that* to be *false*, false as Beelzebub, till you get clearer evidence?

This is an explicit statement, and no one who knew Carlyle or has read his books can doubt the sincerity of it. It is true also that while in London he belonged to no recognised body of believers, regarding all such as 'system-mongers' with whom he could have nothing to do. He had attended the Presbyterian church in Annandale, for it was the communion in which he was born. He had read the Bible to his household at Craigenputtock. But the Kirk in London was not the Kirk in Scotland. He made one or two experiments to find something not entirely unworthy.

I tried various chapels (he said to me); I found in each some vulgar illiterate man declaiming about matters of which he knew nothing. I tried the Church of England. I found there a decent educated gentleman reading out of a book words very beautiful which had expressed once the sincere thoughts of pious admirable souls. I decidedly preferred the Church of England man, but I had to say to him: 'I perceive, sir, that at the bottom you know as little about the matter as the other fellow.'

Thus with the Church of England, too, he had not

been able to connect himself, and as it was the rule of his life not only never to profess what he did not believe, but never by his actions to seem to believe it, he stayed away and went to no place of worship except accidentally.

Meanwhile the fortnight's idleness expired; he went to work again over his lost volume, but became 'so sick' that he still made little progress. Emerson continued to press him to move for good and all to America, where he would find many friends and a congenial audience for his teaching; and more than once he thought of leaving the unlucky thing unwritten and of acting on Emerson's advice. He was very weary, and the books with which he tried to distract himself had no charm.

Journal.

May 26, 1835.—Went on Sunday with Wordsworth's new volume to Kensington Gardens; got through most of it there. A picture of a wren's nest, two pictures of such almost all that abides with me. A genuine but a small diluted man. No other thing can I think of him; they must sing and they must say whatsoever seems good to them. Coleridge's 'Table Talk,' also insignificant for most part, a helpless Psyche overspun with Church of England cobwebs; a weak, diffusive, weltering, ineffectual man. The Nunc Domine's I hear chanted about these two persons had better provoke no reply from me. What is false in them passes. What is true deserves acceptance—speaks at least for a sense on their part. . . .

The book—the poor book—can make no progress at all. I sit down to it every day, but feel broken down at the end of a page; page too not written, only scribbled. Suppose

that we did throw it by. It is not by paper alone that a man lives. My bodily health is actually very bad. To get a little rest and bloom up again out of this wintry obstruction, impotence, and desolation, were the first attainment. To-day I am full of dyspepsia, but also of hope. The world is *not* a bonehouse ; it is a living home, better or worse.

Disastrous twilight ! dim eclipse ! That is the state I sit in at present. Singular, too, how near my extreme misery is to peace, almost to some transient glimpses of happiness. It seems to me I shall either before long recover myself into life (alas ! I have never yet lived) or end it, which alternative is not undesirable to me. I *am* actually learning to take it easier. . . .

Coleridge's 'Table Talk' insignificant yet expressive of Coleridge : a great possibility that has not realised itself. Never did I see such apparatus got ready for thinking, and so little thought. He mounts scaffolding, pulleys, and tackle, gathers all the tools in the neighbourhood with labour, with noise, demonstration, precept, abuse, and sets—three bricks. I do *not* honour the man. I pity him (with the opposite of contempt) ; see in him one glorious up-struggling ray (as it were) which perished, all but ineffectual, in a lax, languid, impotent character. This is my theory of Coleridge—very different from that of his admirers here. Nothing, I find, confuses me more than the admiration, the kind of man admired, I see current here. So measurable these infinite men do seem, so unedifying the doxologies chanted to them. Yet in that also there is something which I really do try to profit by. The man that lives has a real way of living, built on thought of one or the other sort. He is a fact. Consider him. Draw knowledge from him.

No work to-day, as of late days or weeks, neither does my conscience much reproach me. This is *rather* curious. Significant of what ?

It was significant of a growing misgiving on Carlyle's part that he had mistaken his profession, and that as a man of letters—as a true and honest man of letters—he could not live. Everything was against him. No one wanted him; no one believed his report; and even Fate itself was now warning him off with menacing finger. Still in a lamed condition he writes on June 4 to his mother:—

I have grave doubts about many things connected with this book of mine and books in general, for all is in the uttermost confusion in that line of business here. But, God be thanked, I have *no* doubt about my course of duty in the world, or that, if I am driven back at one door, I must go on trying at another. There are some two or even three outlooks opening on me unconnected with books. One of these regards the business of national education which Parliament is now busy upon, in which I mean to try all my strength to get something to do, for my conscience greatly approves of the work as useful. Whether I shall succeed herein I cannot with the smallest accuracy guess as yet. Another outlook invites my consideration from America, a project chalked out for passing a winter over the water and lecturing there. Something or other we shall devise. I shall probably have fixed on nothing till we meet and have a *smoke* together, and get the thing all *summered* and *wintered* talking together freely once more.

It was a mere chance at this time that the 'French Revolution' and literature with it were not flung aside for good and all, and that the Carlyle whom the world knows had never been. If Charles Buller, or Molesworth, or any other leading Radical who had seen his worth, had told the Government that if they meant to

begin in earnest on the education of the people, here was the man for them, Carlyle would have closed at once with the offer. The effort of writing, always great (for he wrote, as his brother said, 'with his heart's blood' in a state of fevered tension), the indifference of the world to his past work, his uncertain future, his actual poverty, had already burdened him beyond his strength. He always doubted whether he had any special talent for literature. He was conscious of possessing considerable powers, but he would have preferred at all times to have found a use for them in action. And everything was now conspiring to drive him into another career. If nothing could be found for him at home, America was opening its arms. He could lecture for a season in New England, save sufficient money, and then draw away into the wilderness, to build a new Scotsbrig in the western forest. So the possibility presented itself to him in this interval of enforced helplessness. He would go away and struggle with the stream no more. And yet at the bottom of his mind, as he told me, something said to him, 'My good fellow, you are not fit for that either.' Perhaps he felt that when he was once across the water, America would at any rate be a better mother to him than England, would find what he was suited for, and would not let his faculties be wasted. In writing to his mother he made light of his troubles, but his spirit was nearly broken.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: June 15, 1835.

My poor ill-starred 'French Revolution' is lying as a

mass of unformed rubbish, fairly laid by under lock and key. About a fortnight after writing to you last this was the deliberate desperate resolution I came to. My way was daily getting more intolerable, more inconsiderable, comparable, as I often say, to a man swimming *in vacuo*. There was labour nigh insufferable, but no joy, no furtherance. My poor nerves, for long months kept at the stretch, felt all too waste, distracted. I flung it by, saying, 'If I never write it, why then it will never be written. Not by ink alone shall a man live or die.' This is the first time in my life I ever did such a thing; neither do I doubt much but that it was rather wise. It goes abreast with much that is coming to a crisis with me. You would feel astonished to see with what quietude I have laid down my head on its stone pillow in these circumstances, and said to Poverty, Dispiritment, Exclusion, Necessity, and the Devil, 'Go your course, friends; behold, I lie here and rest.' In fact, with all the despair that is round about me, there is not in myself, I do think, the least desperation. I feel rather as if, quite possibly, I might be about bursting the accursed enchantment that has held me, all my weary days, in *nameless* thraldom, and actually beginning to be alive. There has been much given me to suffer, to learn from, this last year. That things should come to a crisis is what I wish. Also how true it is, *Deux afflictions mises ensemble peuvent devenir une consolation.* On the whole I shall never regret coming to London, where if boundless confusion, some elements of order have also met me; above all things, the real faces and lives of my fellow mortals, stupid or wise, so unspeakably instructive to me.[1] Fancy me for the present reading all manner of silly books, and for these late days one pregnant book, Dante's

[1] In the journal under the same date Carlyle says: 'Very often of late has this stanza of Goethe's come into my mind. I translated it in the *Wanderjahre*, but never understood it before:—

'Inferno;' running about amongst people and things, looking even of a bright sunset on Hyde Park and its glory; I sitting on the stump of an oak, it rolling and curvetting past me on the Serpentine drive, really very superb and given gratis. Unspeakable thoughts rise out of it. This, then, is the last efflorescence of the Tree of Being. Hengst and Horsa were bearded, but ye gentlemen have got razors and breeches; and oh, my fair ones, how are ye changed since Boadicea wore her own hair unfrizzled hanging down as low as her hips! The Queen Anne hats and heads have dissolved into air, and behold you here and me, prismatic light-streaks on the bosom of the sacred night. And so it goes on.

As writing seemed impossible, Carlyle had determined to go to Scotland after all. Lady Clare had meant to be in England soon after midsummer, bringing John Carlyle with her. John was now the great man of the family, the man of income, the travelled doctor from Italy, the companion of a peeress. His arrival was looked forward to at Scotsbrig with natural eagerness. Carlyle and he were to go down together and consult with their mother about future plans. Mrs. Carlyle would go with them to pay a visit to her mother. The journey might be an expense, but John was rich, and the fares to Edinburgh by steamer were not considerable. In the gloom that hung over Chelsea this prospect had

> "There in others' looks discover
> What thy own life's course has been
> And thy deeds of years past over
> In thy fellow-men be seen."

It is verily so. I am painfully learning much here, if not by the wisdom of the people, yet by their existence, nay by their stupidity. Learn—live and learn.'

been the one streak of sunshine—and unhappily it was all clouded over. Lady Clare could not come home after all, and John was obliged to remain with her, though with a promise of leave of absence in the autumn. At Radical Scotsbrig there was indignation enough at a fine lady's caprices destroying other people's pleasures. Carlyle more gently 'could pity the heart that suffered, whether it beat under silk or under sackcloth' for Lady Clare's life was not a happy one. He collected his energy. To soften his wife's disappointment, he invited Mrs. Welsh to come immediately on a long visit to Cheyne Row. Like his father he resolved to 'gar himself' finish the burnt volume in spite of everything, and to think no more of Scotland till it was done. The sudden change gave him back his strength.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea : June 30, 1835.

As for our own share there is need of a new resolution, and we have gone far to form one. Jane thinks that if we are to wait till September it will be needless for her to come to Scotland this year. She had, in the main, only her mother to see there, and it seems the shorter way to send for her mother up hither without delay. Jack and I, if he is coming, can go to Scotland by ourselves. At lowest, when Mrs. Welsh was returning, I would accompany her, and you would see me at least. I at any rate am to fall instantly to *work again*, having now filled up my full measure of idleness. . . . That wretched burnt MS. must, if the *gae of life* remains in me, be replaced. 'It shall be done, sir,' as the Cockneys say. After that the whole world is before me, where to choose. I cannot say I am in the smallest degree 'tining heart' in

these perplexities. Nay, I think in general I have not been in so good heart these ten years. London and its quackeries and follies and confusions does not daunt me. I look on all matters that pertain to it with a kind of silent defiance, confident to the last that the work my Maker meant me to do I shall verily do, let the Devil and his servants obstruct as they will. . . . The literary craft, as I have often explained to you, seems gone for this generation. I do not see how a man that will not take the Devil into partnership—one of the worst partnerships, if I have any judgment—is to exist by it henceforth. Well, then, it is gone. Let it go with a blessing. We will seek for another occupation. We will seek and find. It is on one's self and what comes of one's own doings that all depends. However, I must have this book *off my hands*. Should I even burn it, I will be done with it.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: July 2.

I have decided to falling instantly to work again with vigour. If I *can* write that 'Revolution' volume, the saddest affair I ever had to manage, I will do it. The first wish of my heart is that it were *done* in almost any way; weary, most weary am I of it. I will either write it or burn it, or . . . . One thing that will gratify you is the perceptible increase of health this otherwise so scandalous *faulenzen* (idling) has given me. I am also farther than ever from 'tining heart.' Nothing definite yet turns up for my future life. Yet several things turn more decisively down, which is also something; amongst others literature. I feel well that *it* is a thing I shall never live by here; moreover, that there are many things besides *it* in God's universe. . . . As a last resource, in the dim background rises America, rise the

kindest invitations there. I really could go and open my mouth in Boston to that strange audience with considerable audacity; perhaps it were the making of me to learn to speak. I really in some moods feel no kind of tendency to whimper or even to gloom. God's world, ruled over by the Prince of the Power of the Air, is round me, and I have taken my side in it, and know what I mean as well as the Prince knows. Fancy me working and not unhappy till I hear from you. . . . I find I could get employment and pay, writing in the 'Times,' but I will have no trade with that. Old Sterling amuses me a little; has eyes; has had them on men and men's ways many years now, a trenchant, clean-washed, military old gentleman.

Things after this began to brighten. Mrs. Welsh came up to cheer her daughter, whose heart had almost failed like her husband's, for she had no fancy for an American forest. Carlyle went vigorously to work, and at last successfully. In ten days he had made substantial progress, though with 'immense difficulty' still. 'It was and remained the most ungrateful and intolerable task he had ever undertaken.' But he felt that he was getting on with it, and recovered his peace of mind. He even began to be interested again in the subject itself, which had become for the time entirely distasteful to him, and to regret that he could not satisfy himself better in his treatment of it. Notwithstanding his defence of his style to Sterling, he wished the skin were less 'rhinoceros-like.'

Journal.

July 15, 1835.—The book. I do honestly apprehend, will

never be worth almost anything. What a deliverance, however, merely to have done with it! This is almost my only motive now. I detest the task, but am hounded into it by feelings still more detestable. I am all wrong about it in my way of setting it forth, and *cannot* mend myself. I think often I have mistaken my trade. That of style gives me great uneasiness. So many persons, almost everybody that speaks to me, objects to my style as 'too full of meaning.' Had it no other fault! I seldom read in any dud of a book, novel, or the like, where the writing seems to flow along like talk (certainly not 'too full') without a certain pain, a certain envy. Ten pages of that were easier than a sentence or paragraph of mine; and yet such is the result. What to do? To write on *the best one can*, get the free'st, sincerest possible utterance, taking in all guidances towards that, putting aside with best address all misguidances. Truly I feel like one that was bursting with meaning, that had no utterance for it, that would and must get one—a most indescribably uneasy feeling, were it not for the hope.

Gradually the story which he was engaged in telling got possession of him again. The terrible scenes of the Revolution seized his imagination, haunting him as he walked about the streets. London and its giddy whirl of life, that too might become as Paris had been. Ah! and what was it all but a pageant passing from darkness into darkness?

The world (he said in these weeks), looks often quite spectral to me; sometimes, as in Regent Street the other night (my nerves being all shattered), quite hideous, discordant, almost infernal. I had been at Mrs. Austin's, heard Sydney Smith for the first time guffawing, other persons

prating, jargoning. To me through these thin cobwebs Death and Eternity sate glaring. Coming homewards along Regent Street, through street-walkers, through—*Ach Gott!* unspeakable pity swallowed up unspeakable abhorrence of it and of myself. The moon and the serene nightly sky in Sloane Street consoled me a little. Smith, a mass of fat and muscularity, with massive Roman nose, piercing hazel eyes, huge cheeks, shrewdness and fun, not humour or even wit, seemingly without soul altogether. Mrs. Marcet ill-looking, honest, rigorous, commonplace. The rest babble, babble. Woe's me that I in Meshech am! To work.

Drawing-room society to a man engaged in painting the flowers of hell which had grown elsewhere on a stock of the same genus was not likely to be agreeable. Sydney Smith especially he never heartily liked, thinking that he wanted seriousness. 'Gad, sir, he believes it all,' Sydney had been heard to say of Lord John Russell when speaking of some grave subject. Amidst such 'spectral' feelings the writing of the 'French Revolution' went on. By August 10 Carlyle was within sight of the end of the unfortunate volume which had cost him so dear, and could form a notion of what he had done. His wife, an excellent judge, considered the second version better than the first. Carlyle himself thought it worse, but not much worse; at any rate he was relieved from the load, and could look forward to finishing the rest. Sometimes he thought the book would produce an effect; but he had hoped the same from 'Sartor,' and he did not choose to be sanguine a second time. On September 23 he was able to tell his brother that the last line of the volume was

actually written, that he was entirely exhausted and was going to Annandale to recover himself.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: September 23, 1835.

By the real blessing and favour of Heaven I got done with that unutterable MS. on Monday last, and have wrapped it up there to lie till the other two volumes be complete. The work does not seem to myself to be very much worse than it was. It is worse in the style of expression, but better compacted in the thought. On the whole I feel like a man who had nearly killed himself in accomplishing zero. What a deliverance! I shall never without a kind of shudder look back at the detestable state of enchantment I have worked in for these six months and am now blessedly delivered from. The rest of the book shall go on quite like child's play in comparison. Also I do think it will be a queer book, one of the queerest published in this century, and *can*, though it cannot be popular, be better than that. My Teufelsdröckh humour, no voluntary one, of looking through the clothes, finds singular scope in this subject. Remarkable also is the 'still death-defiance' I have settled into, equivalent to the most absolute sovereignty conceivable by the mind. I say 'still death-defiance,' yet it is not unblended with a Greek fire of hope unquenchable, which glows up silent, steady, brighter and brighter. My one thought is to be done with this book. Innumerable things point all that way. My whole destiny seems as if it lost itself in chaos there (for my money also gets done then)—in chaos which I am to recreate or perish miserably—an arrangement which I really regard as blessed comparatively. So I sit here and write, composed in mood, responsible to no man and no thing; only to God and my own conscience.

with publishers, reviewers, hawkers, bill-stickers indeed on the earth around me, but with the stars and the azure eternity above me in the heavens. Let us be thankful. On the whole I am rather stupid; or rather I am not stupid, for I feel a fierce glare of insight in me into many things. Not stupid, but I have no *sleight of hand*, a raw untrained savage —for every trained civilised man has that sleight, and is a bred workman by having it, the bricklayer with his trowel, the painter with his bush, the writer with his pen. The result of the whole is 'one must just do the best he can for a living, boy,' or, in my mother's phrase, 'Never tine heart,' or get provoked heart, which is likewise a danger.

The journal adds:—

On Monday last, about four o'clock on a wet day, I finished that MS. I ought to feel thankful to Heaven, but scarcely do sufficiently. The thing itself is *no* thing. Nevertheless, the getting done with it was all in all. I could do no other or better. The book, it is to be hoped, will now go on with some impetus. It is not *enchanted* work, but fair daylight aboveboard work, though hard work, and with a poor workman. I am now for Scotland, to rest myself and see my mother. What a year this has been! I have suffered much, but also lived much. Courage! hat firmly set on head, foot firmly planted. Fear nothing but fear. I fancy I shall go in an Edinburgh smack; not the worst way, and the cheapest though slowest.

CHAPTER III.

A.D. 1835-6. ÆT. 40-41.

Visit to Scotland—Hard conditions of life—Scotsbrig—Return to London—Effort of faith—Letter from his mother—Schemes for employment—Offer from Basil Montagu—Polar bears—Struggles with the book—Visit from John Carlyle—Despondency—Money anxieties—Mrs. Carlyle in Scotland—Letters to her—'Diamond Necklace' printed—'French Revolution' finished.

In the first week in October Carlyle started for his old home, not in a smack, though he had so purposed, but in a steamer to Newcastle, whence there was easy access, though railways as yet were not, to Carlisle and Annandale. His letters and diary give no bright picture of his first year's experience in London, and fate had dealt hardly with him; but he had gained much notwithstanding. His strong personality had drawn attention wherever he had been seen. He had been invited with his wife into cultivated circles, literary and political. The Sterlings were not the only new friends whom they had made. Their poverty was unconcealed; there was no sham in either of the Carlyles, and there were many persons anxious to help them in any form in which help could be accepted. Presents of all kinds, hampers of wine, and suchlike poured in upon them. Carlyle did not speak of these things. He did not feel them less than other people, but he was chary of polite expressions which are so often but half sincere, and he often seemed

indifferent or ungracious when at heart he was warmly grateful. Mrs. Carlyle, when disappointed of her trip to Scotland, had been carried off into the country by the Sterlings for a week or two. In August Mrs. Welsh came, and stayed on while Carlyle was away. She was a gifted woman, a little too sentimental for her sarcastic daughter, and troublesome with her caprices. They loved each other dearly and even passionately. They quarrelled daily and made it up again. Mrs. Carlyle, like her husband, was not easy to live with. But on the whole they were happy to be together again after so long a separation. They had friends of their own who gathered about them in Carlyle's absence. Mrs. Carlyle occupied herself in learning Italian, painting and arranging the rooms, negotiating a sofa out of her scanty allowance, preparing a pleasant surprise when he should come back to his work. He on his part was not left to chew his own reflections. He was to provide the winter stock of bacon and hams and potatoes and meal at Scotsbrig. He was to find a Scotch lass for a servant and bring her back with him. He was to dispose of the rest of the Craigenputtock stock which had been left unsold, all excellent antidotes against spectral visions. He had his old Annandale relations to see again, in whose fortunes he was eagerly interested, and to write long stories about them to his brother John. In such occupation, varied with daily talks and smokes with his mother, and in feeding himself into health on milk or porridge, Carlyle passed his holiday. He walked far and fast among the hills, with an understanding of their charm as keen as an artist's, though art he affected to disdain.

I am sometimes sad enough (he told his brother), but that, too, is profitable. I have moments of inexpressible beauty, like auroral gleams on a sky all dark. My book seems despicable; however I will write it. After that there remains for me—on the whole exactly what God has appointed, therefore let us take it thankfully.

One characteristic letter to his wife remains, written from Scotsbrig on this visit. It was in reply to her pretty Anglo-Italian epistle of October 26.[1]

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: November 2, 1835.

All people say, and, what is more to the purpose, I myself rather feel, that my health is greatly improved since I got hither. Alas! the state of wreckage I was in, fretted, as thou sayest, to fiddlestrings, was enormous. Even yet, after a month's idleness and much recovery, I feel it all so well. Silence for a solar year; this, were it possible, would be my blessedness. All is so black, confused, about me, streaked with splendour too as of heaven; and I the most helpless of mortals in the middle of it. I could say with Job of old, 'Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends.' And thou, my poor Goody, depending on cheerful looks of *mine* for thy cheerfulness! For God's sake do not, or do so as little as possible. How I love thee, what I think of thee, it is not probable that thou or any mortal will know. But cheerful looks, when the heart feels slowly dying in floods of confusion and obstruction, are not the thing I have to give. Courage, however—courage to the last! One thing in the middle of this chaos I can more and more determine to adhere to—it is now almost my sole rule of life—to clear myself of

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 40.

cants and formulas as of poisonous Nessus shirts ; to strip them off me, by what name soever called, and follow, were it down to Hades, what I myself know and see. Pray God only that sight be given me, freedom of eyes to see with. I fear nothing then, nay, hope infinite things. It is a great misery for a man to lie, even unconsciously, even to himself. Also I feel at this time as if I should never laugh more, or rather say never sniff and whiffle and *pretend* to laugh more. The despicable titter of a '——,' for example, seems to me quite criminally small. Life is no frivolity, or hypothetical coquetry or whifflery. It is a great 'world of truth,' that we are alive, that I am alive ; that I saw the 'Sweet Milk well' yesterday, flowing for the last four thousand years, from its three sources on the hill side, the origin of Middlebie Burn, and noted the little dell it had hollowed out all the way, and the huts of Adam's posterity built sluttishly along its course, and a sun shining overhead ninety millions of miles off, and eternity all round, and life a vision, dream and yet fact woven with uproar on the loom of time. Withal it should be said that my biliousness is considerable to-day ; that I am not so unhappy as I talk, nay, perhaps rather happy ; in one word, that my mother indulged me this morning in a cup of —— ! I am actually very considerably better than when we parted. . . . The sheet is all but done, and no word of thanks for your fine Italian-English letter, which I read three times actually and did not burn. It is the best news to me that you are getting better ; that you feel cheerful, as your writing indicated. My poor Goody ! it seems as if she could so easily be happy ; and the easy means are so seldom there. Let us take it bravely, honestly. It will not beat us both. What you say of the sofa is interesting, more than I like to confess. May it be good for us ! I feel as if an immeasurable everlasting sofa was precisely the thing I wanted even now. Oh dear ! I wish I was there, on the simple greatness of that

one, such as it is, and Goody might be as near as she liked. *Hadere nicht mit deiner Mutter, Liebste. Trage, trage ; es wird bald enden.*[1]

God bless thee, my poor little darling. I think we shall be happier some time, and oh, how happy if God will!

Your ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

The holiday lasted but four weeks, and Carlyle was again at his work at Chelsea. He was still restless, of course, with so heavy a load upon him; but he did his best to be cheerful under it. Her chief resources were the Sterlings and the Italian lessons, and as long as she was well in health her spirits did not fail. Him, too, the Sterlings' friendship helped much to encourage; but he was absorbed in his writing and could think of little else. To his brother John he was regular in his accounts of himself, and complained as little as could be expected.

I could live very patiently (he said) amid this circle of London people. They are greatly the best people I ever walked with. One is freer than anywhere else in the world, esteemed without being questioned, more at home than one has been. I will stay here and try it out to the last; but indeed my soul is like to grow quite sick, and I feel as if no resting-place waited me on this side the Great Ocean. It is a petulant, weak thought; neither do I long to die till I have done my task. I think, however, I will quit literature.

[1] Quarrel not with your mother, dearest. Be patient; be patient. It will soon end.

Journal.

December 23, 1835.—To write of the conditions, external and especially internal, in which I live at present, is impossible for me; unprofitable were it possible. Bad bodily health added to all the rest makes the ungainliest result of it, frightful, drawing towards what consummation? Silence is better. Be silent, be calm, at least not mad. On the 4th of this month, not without remembering and bitterly considering, I completed my fortieth year. Spiritual strength, as I feel, still grows in me. All other things, outward fortune, business among men, go on crumbling and decaying. *C'est égal.* Providence again is leading me through dark, burning, hideous ways towards new heights and developments. Nothing, or almost nothing, is certain to me, except the Divine Infernal character of this universe I live in, worthy of horror, worthy of worship. So much, and what I can infer from that.

Nothing came of the national education scheme. Carlyle was not a person to push himself into notice. Either Buller and his other friends did not exert themselves for him, or they tried and failed; governments, in fact, do not look out for servants among men who are speculating about the nature of the universe. Then as always the doors leading into regular employment remained closed. From his mother as far as possible he concealed his anxieties. But she knew him too well to be deceived. She, too, was heavy at heart for her idolised son, less on account of his uncertain prospects than for the want of faith, as she considered it, which was the real cause of his trouble. He told her always that essentially he thought as she did, but she could hardly believe it; and though she no longer argued or

remonstrated, yet she dwelt in her letters to him, in her own simple way, on the sources of her own consolation. She was intensely interested in his work. She was identifying herself with the progress of it by making him a new dressing-gown which was to be his when the book was finished. Yet what was it all compared with the one thing needful? One of her letters to him—one out of many—may be inserted here as a specimen of what this noble woman really was.

Margaret Carlyle to Thomas Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: December 15, 1835.

Dear Son,—I need not say how glad I was to see your hand once more. It had been lying at the post-office for some time, I think, for I had got the Annan ones the day before, which, I think, must have been sent later than it. They were all thrice welcome. I am glad to hear you are getting on with your book, in spite of all the difficulties you have had to struggle with, which have been many. I need not say, for you know already, I wish it a happy and a long life. Keep a good heart. May God give us all grace to stay our hearts on Him who has said in His word, 'He will keep them in perfect peace, whose minds are stayed on Him, because they trust in Him.'

Wait on the Lord and be thou strong,
  And He shall strength afford
Unto thy heart: yea, do thou wait,
  I say, upon the Lord.
What time my heart is overwhelmed
  And in perplexity,
Do Thou me lead unto the Rock
  That higher is than I.

Let us not be careful what the world thinks of us, if we can say with a good conscience with Toplady :

> Careless, myself a dying man,
> Of dying men's esteem ;
> Happy, oh Lord, if Thou approve,
> Though all beside condemn.

You will say 'I know all these things.' But they are sooner said than done. Be of courage, my dear son, and seek God for your guide.

I was glad to hear of John having got to Rome. He has had many wanderings, poor fellow ! When you write, will you thank him for his letter he sent me ? I was got rather uneasy about him. I think there are none that has got so much cause of thankfulness as I. We are all going on the old way, but it has been such a year as I do not remember for bad weather. It has grown worse and worse. Nevertheless it is better than we deserve, for we are froward children, a sinful generation. God be merciful to us sinners. He has never dealt with us as we deserve. I have been full well all this winter, till I got a face cold and toothache. It is better now, almost gone. I keep good fires and am very dry and comfortable.

Give my love to your Goody. I am glad to hear she is rather better. I will be glad to see you both here to rest a while when the fight is over. There perhaps never was a greater scrawl. Wink at it. God bless you, my dear children.

Your affectionate Mother,
MARGARET A. CARLYLE.

Another shorter letter followed, to which and to this one Carlyle answered.

I got your three words, mother, and was right glad of

them in the absence of more. I assure you I will be 'canny'—nay I must, for a little overwork hurts me, and is found on the morrow to be quite the contrary of gain. I have many a rebellious troublesome thought in me, proceeding not a little from ill health of body. But I deal with them as I best can, and get them kicked out. Pride ! pride ! as I often say. It lies deep in me, and must be beaten out with many stripes. . . . The young clergyman, John Sterling [did he wish innocently to please his mother by the clerical character of his friend ?], comes very much about me, and proves by far the lovablest man I have met for many a year. His speech always enlivens me and shortens the long walks we sometimes take.

It was very difficult for Carlyle (as he told me) to speak with or write to his mother directly about religion. She quieted her anxieties as well as she could by recognising the deep unquestionable piety of her son's nature. It was on the worldly side, after all, that there was real cause for alarm. The little stock of money would be gone now in a few months ; and then what was to be done ? America seemed the only resource. Yet to allow such a man to expatriate himself —a man, too, who would be contented with the barest necessaries of life—because in England he could not live, would be a shame and a scandal ; and various schemes for keeping him were talked over among his friends. The difficulty was that he was himself so stubborn and impracticable. He would not write in the 'Times,' because the 'Times' was committed to a great political party, and Carlyle would have nothing to do with parties. Shortly after he came back from Scotland, he was offered the editorship of a newspaper

at Lichfield. This was unacceptable for the same reason; and if he could have himself consented, his wife would not. She could never persuade herself that her husband would fail to rise to greatness on his own lines, or allow him to take an inferior situation. In mentioning this Lichfield proposal to his brother John, she said:—

I declare to you, my dear brother, I can never get myself worked up into proper anxiety about how soul and body are to be kept together. The idea of starvation cannot somehow ever be brought home to my bosom. I have always a sort of lurking assurance that if one's bread ceases it will be possible to live on pie-crust. Besides, whose bread ever does entirely cease who has brains and fingers to bake it, unless indeed he be given over to Salthound[1] in the shape of strong liquors, which is not my case happily ?

A more singular proposition reached Carlyle from another quarter, kindly meant perhaps, but set forward with an air of patronage which the humblest of men would have resented unless at the last extremity; and humility was certainly not one of Carlyle's qualities. The Basil Montagus had been among the first friends to whom he had been introduced by Irving when he came to London in 1824. Great things had been then expected of him on Irving's report. Mrs. Montagu had interested herself deeply in all his concerns. She had been initiated into the romance of Jane Welsh's early life, and it was by her interference (which had never been wholly forgiven) that her marriage with

[1] Carlylean name for Satan.

Carlyle had been precipitated. For some years a correspondence had been kept up, somewhat inflated on Mrs. Montagu's side, but showing real kindness and a real wish to be of use. The acquaintance had continued after the Carlyles settled in Chelsea, but Mrs. Montagu's advances had not been very warmly received, and were suspected, perhaps unjustly, of not being completely sincere. The sympathetic letter which she had ventured to write to Mrs. Carlyle on Irving's death had been received rather with resentment than satisfaction. Still the Montagus remained in the circle of Carlyle's friends. They were aware of his circumstances, and were anxious to help him if they knew how to set about it. It was with some pleasure, and perhaps with some remorse at the doubts which he had entertained of the sincerity of their regard, that Carlyle learned that Basil Montagu had a situation in view for him which, if he liked it, he might have—a situation, he was told, which would secure him a sufficient income, and would leave him time besides for his own writing. The particulars were reserved to be explained at a personal interview. Carlyle had been so eager, chiefly for his wife's sake, to find something to hold on to, that he would not let the smallest plank drift by without examining it. He had a vague misgiving, but he blamed himself for his distrust. The interview took place, and the contempt with which he describes Mr. Montagu's proposition is actually savage.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: January 26, 1836.

Basil Montagu had a life benefaction all cut out and

dried for me—No : it depended on the measure of gratitude whether it was to be ready for me or for another. A clerkship under him at the rate of 200*l.* a year, whereby a man lecturing also in mechanics' institutes in the evening, and doing etceteras, might live. I listened with grave fixed eyes to the sovereign of quacks, as he mewed out all the fine sentimentalities he had stuffed into this beggarly account of empty boxes—for which too I had been sent trotting many miles of pavement, though I knew from the beginning it could be only moonshine—and, with grave thanks for this potentiality of a clerkship, took my leave that night ; and next morning, all still in the potential mood, sent an indicative threepenny. My wish and expectation partly is that Montagudom generally would be kind enough to keep its own side of the pavement. Not very expressible is the kind of feeling the whole thing now raises in me—madness varnished over by lies which you see through and through. One other thing I could not but remark—the *faith* of Montagu wishing *me* for his clerk ; thinking the polar bear, reduced to a state of dyspeptic dejection, might safely be trusted tending rabbits. Greater faith I have not found in Israel. Let us leave these people. They shall hardly again cost me even an exchange of threepennies.

The 'polar bear,' it might have occurred to Carlyle, is a difficult beast to find accommodation for. People do not eagerly open their doors to such an inmate. Basil Montagu, doubtless, was not a wise man, and was unaware of the relative values of himself and the person that he thought of for a clerk. But, after all, situations suited for polar bears are not easily found outside the Zoological Gardens. It was not Basil Montagu's fault that he was not a person of superior quality. He knew

that Carlyle was looking anxiously for employment with a fixed salary, and a clerkship in his office had, in his eyes, nothing degrading in it. Except in a country like Prussia, where a discerning government is on the look-out always for men of superior intellect, and knows what to do with them, the most gifted genius must begin upon the lowest step of the ladder. The proposal was of course an absurd one, and the scorn with which it was received was only too natural; but this small incident shows only how impossible it was at this time to do anything for Carlyle except what was actually done, to leave him to climb the precipices of life by his own unassisted strength.

Thus, throughout this year 1836, he remained fixed at his work in Cheyne Row. He wrote all the morning. In the afternoon he walked, sometimes with Mill or Sterling, more often alone, making his own reflections. One evening in January, he writes:—

I thought to-day up at Hyde Park Corner, seeing all the carriages dash hither and thither, and so many human bipeds cheerily hurrying along, 'There you go, brothers, in your gilt carriages and prosperities, better or worse, and make an extreme bother and confusion, the devil very largely in it. And I too, by the blessing of the Maker of me, I too am authorised and equipped by Heaven's Act of Parliament to do that small secret somewhat, and will do it without any consultation of yours. Let us be brothers, therefore, or at worst silent peaceable neighbours, and each go his own way.'

Carlyle was radical enough in the sense that he had no respect for the gilt carriages, and knew whither they were probably rolling, but he had neither purpose

nor wish to be a revolutionary agitator, knowing that revolution meant only letting the devil loose, whom it was man's duty to keep bound. Mrs. Carlyle was confined through the winter and spring with a dangerous cough. He himself, though he complained, was fairly well; nothing was essentially the matter, but he slept badly from overwork, 'gaeing stavering aboot the hoose at night,' as the Scotch maid said, restless alike in mind and body. When he paused from his book to write a letter or a note in his journal, it was to discover a state of nerves irritated by the contrast between his actual performance and the sense of what he was trying to accomplish. The ease which he expected when the lost volume was recovered had not been found. The toil was severe as ever.

Journal.

March 22, 1836.—Month after month passes without any notice here. In some four days I expect to be done with the chapter called 'Legislative.' It has been a long and sorry task. My health, very considerably worse than usual, held me painfully back. The work, it oftenest seems to me, will never be worth a rush, yet I am writing it, as they say, with my heart's blood. The sorrow and chagrin I suffer is very great. Physical pain is bad—dispiritment, gloomy silence of rebellion against myself and all the arrangements of my existence is worse. I shudder sometimes at the abysses I discern in myself, the acrid hunger, the shivering sensitiveness, the *wickedness* (and yet can I say at this moment that I think myself rightly *wicked?*). Confusion clings to a man.

There is something edifying, however, in the perfectly composed peace of mind with which I have renounced one

province of my interests and given it up to Fortune to do her own will with it : the economical province. Our money runs fast away daily. It will be about *done* at the time this book is done ; and then—my destiny, as it were, ends. I seem not to care a straw for that ; nay, rather to like it, if anything, as implying the end of much else that is growing insupportable. Some vague outlook, which I half know to be inane, opens in my imagination to America, or some western woods and solitude, far from the fret and confusion of these places ; rest anywhere ; and yet I still do not want generally to rest in the *grave*. All fame, and so forth, seems the wretchedest mockery. It sometimes appears possible that it may come my way too—for I do not hide from myself that I am above hundreds that have it. But even in that case I say honestly *Wozu?* one dies soon—soon—and his fame! Say it lived three centuries after him! I do pray to God to be guided into some more solid anchor-ground, and to leave that as a restless quicksand which has swallowed up so many, to welter according to its own will. Also, it many times strikes me, Being in ill-health and so miserable, art thou not of a surety wrong? Why not quit literature—with a vengeance to it—and turn, were it even to sheep herding, where one can be well? Dark straits and contentions of will against constraint seem to threaten me—I cannot help it. Peace! peace! It is one's own mind that is wrong.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea : March 31, 1836.

It seems as if I were enchanted to this sad book. Peace in the world there will be none for me till I have it done ; and then very generally it seems the miserablest mooncalf of a book, full of *Ziererei* (affectation), do what I will ;

tumbling head foremost through all manner of established rules. And no money to be had for it; and no value that I can count on of any kind, simply the blessedness of being done with it. It comes across me like the breath of heaven, that I shall verily be done with it in some few weeks now. Then let it go, to be trodden down in the gutters if the poor people like; to be lifted on poles if they like, to be made a kirk and mill of. The indifference that I feel about all mortal things is really very considerable. Glory and disgrace, poverty and wealth, gig and eight, or torn shoe soles, behold, brethren, it is all alike to me. I too have my indefeasible lot and portion in this God's universe of vapour and of substance, and grudge you not, and hate you not, rather love you in an underhand manner and wish you speed on your path.

At the back of Carlyle's house in Cheyne Row is a strip of garden, a grass plot, a few trees and flower-beds along the walls, where are (or were) some bits of jessamine and a gooseberry-bush or two, transported from Haddington and Craigenputtock. Here, when spring came on, Carlyle used to dig and plant and keep the grass trim and tidy. Sterling must have seen him with his spade there when he drew the picture of Collins in the 'Onyx Ring,' which is evidently designed for Carlyle. The digging must have been more of a relaxation for him than the walks, where the thinking and talking went on without interruption. Very welcome and a real relief was the arrival of his brother John at last in the middle of April. Lady Clare could not part with him in the autumn, but she had come now herself, bringing the doctor with her, and had allowed him three months'

leave of absence. Half his holiday was to be spent in Cheyne Row. The second volume of the 'Revolution' was finished, and Carlyle gave himself up to the full enjoyment of his brother's company. He had six weeks of real rest and pleasure; for his curiosity was insatiable, and John, just from Italy, could tell him infinite things which he wanted to know. Scotsbrig, of course, had claims which were to be respected. When these weeks were over, John had to go north, and Carlyle attended him down the river to the Hull steamer.

'Very cheery to me poor Jack,' he writes when alone at home again; 'I feel without him quite orphaned and alone.' Alone, and at the mercy again of the evil spirits whom 'Jack's' round face had kept at a distance.

Journal.

June 1, 1836.—My dispiritment, my sorrow and pain are great, but I strive to keep silent. Silence is the only method. I am weary and heavy-laden, wearied of all things, almost of life itself—yet not altogether. It is fearful and wonderful to me. Often it seems as if the only grand and beautiful and desirable thing in this dusty fuliginous chaos were to die. Death! The unknown sea of rest! Who knows what hidden harmonies lie there to wrap us in softness, in eternal peace, where perhaps, and not sooner or elsewhere, all the hot longings of the soul are to be satisfied and stilled?

An eternity of life were not endurable to any mortal. To me the thought of it were madness even for one day. Oh! I am far astray, wandering, lost, 'dyeing the thirsty desert with blood in every footprint.' Perhaps God and His providence will be better to me than I hope. Peace, peace! words are idler than idle.

I have seen Wordsworth again. I have seen Landor, Americans, Frenchmen—Cavaignac the Republican. Be no word written of them. Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble. I find emptiness and chagrin, look for nothing else, and on the whole can reverence no existing man, and shall do well to pity *all*, myself first—or rather last. To work therefore. That will still me a little if aught will.

The old, old story: genius, the divine gift which men so envy and admire, which is supposed to lift its possessor to a throne among the gods, gives him, with the intensity of insight, intensity of spiritual suffering. His laurel wreath is a crown of thorns. To all men Carlyle preached the duty of 'consuming their own smoke,' and faithfully he fulfilled his own injunction. He wrote no 'Werthers Leiden,' no musical 'Childe Harold,' to relieve his own heart by inviting the world to weep with him. So far as the world was concerned, he bore his pains in silence, and only in his journal left any written record of them. At home, however, he could not always be reticent; and his sick wife, whose spirits needed raising, missed John's companionship as much as her husband. The household economics became so pressing that the book had to be suspended for a couple of weeks while Carlyle wrote the article on Mirabeau, now printed among the 'Miscellanies,' for Mill's Review. Some fifty pounds was made by this; but by the time the article was finished, Mrs. Carlyle became so ill that she felt that unless she could get away to her mother 'she would surely die.' Carlyle himself could not think of moving, unless for a day or two to a friend in the neighbourhood of London; but everything was

done that circumstances permitted. She went first to her uncle at Liverpool, meaning to proceed (for economy) by the Annan steamer, though in her weak state she dreaded a sea voyage. She was sent forward by the coach. John Carlyle met her and carried her on to her mother at Templand, who had a 'purse of sovereigns' ready for her as a birthday present (July 14). Carlyle himself wrote to her daily, making the best of his condition that she might have as little anxiety as possible on his account. After she was gone he paid a visit to John Mill, who was then living in the country.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle at Templand.

Chelsea: July 24, 1836.

I must tell you about the Mill visit, for I think I sent you a token that I was going. I went accordingly. It is a pretty country—a pretty village of the English straggling wooded sort. The Mills have joined some 'old carpenter's shops' together, and made a pleasant summer mansion (connected by shed-roofed passages), the little drawing-room door of glass looking out into a rose lawn, into green plains, and half a mile off to a most respectable wooded and open broad-shouldered green hill. They were as hospitable as they could be. I was led about, made attentive to innumerable picturesquenesses, &c. &c., all that evening and next day. . . . There was little sorrow visible in their house, or rather none, nor any human feeling at all; but the strangest *unheimlich* kind of composure and acquiescence, as if all human spontaneity had taken refuge in invisible corners. Mill himself talked much, and not stupidly—far from that—but without emotion of any discernible kind. He seemed to me to be withering or withered into the miserablest metaphysical

scrae,[1] body and mind, that I had almost ever met with in the world. His eyes go twinkling and jerking with wild lights and twitches ; his head is bald, his face brown and dry—poor fellow after all. It seemed to me the strangest thing what this man could want with me, or I with such a man so *unheimlich* to me. What will become of it ? Nothing evil ; for there is and there was nothing dishonest in it. But I think I shall see less and less of him. Alas, poor fellow ! It seems possible too that he may not be very long seeable : that is one way of its ending—to say nothing of my own chances. . . .

As for the chapter [of the 'French Revolution'] entitled 'September,' the poor Goody knows with satisfaction that it is done. I worked all day, not all night : indeed, oftenest not at night at all ; but went out and had long swift-striding walks—till ten—under the stars. I have also slept, in general, tolerably. For the last ten days, however, I have been poisoned again with *veal soup*, beef being unattainable. I will know again. The chapter is some thirty-six pages : not at all a bad chapter. Would the Goody had it to read ! A hundred pages more, and this cursed book is flung out of me. I mean to write with force of fire till that consummation ; above all with the speed of fire ; still taking intervals, of course, and resting myself. The unrested horse or writer *cannot* work. But a despicability of a thing that has so long held me, and held us both down to the grindstone, is a thing I could almost swear at and kick out of doors ; at least most swiftly equip for walking out of doors. *Speranza*, thou spairkin Goody ! Hope, my little lassie ! It will all be better than thou thinkest. For two or three days I have the most perfect rest now. Then Louis is to be tried and guillotined. Then the Gironde, &c. It all stands pretty fair in

[1] *Scrae*, 'an old shoe' (Dumfriesshire).

my head, nor do I mean to investigate much more about it, but to splash down what I know in large masses of colours, that it may look like a smoke-and-flame conflagration in the distance, which it is. . . .

My dear little Janekin, I must leave thee now. Write a long letter. They are all very pleasant, very good for me; but the 'reposing humour' would give me the most pleasure of all. *Gehab dich wohl! Sey hold mir! Hoffe; zweifle nicht.* (Keep well! Be good to me! Hope; do not tine heart.) Kiss your kind mother for me. *Adieu! Au revoir!*

Ever affectionately thine,

T. CARLYLE.

His heart was less light than he tried to make it appear. The journal of August 1 says:—

Have finished chapter i. (September) of my third volume, and gone idle a week after, till as usual I am now reduced to a *caput mortuum* again, and do this day begin my second chapter, to be called 'Regicide.' Jane in Dumfriesshire these three weeks or more, shattered with agitation. . . . I see no one—not even the Frenchmen[1]—for above two weeks; very dreary of outlook; one sole guiding star for me on earth, that of getting done with my book.

Mrs. Carlyle was scarcely better off, Scotch air having done little for her. He writes to her a week later.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Chelsea: August 8.

Du armes Kind,—The letter, which I opened with eagerness enough, made me altogether *wae*. No rest for the poor

[1] Garnier and Godefroi Cavaignac. See *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i.

wearied one. In her mother's house, too, she must wake 'at four in the morning,' and have frettings and annoyances. It is very hard. The world is so wide; and for my poor Jane there is no place where she can find shelter in it. Patience, my poor lassie! It is not so bad as that: it shall not be so bad.

Since there is no good to be done in Scotland, what remains but that you come back hither with such despatch as suits? There is quietude here; there is liberty; you shall have *bread* to eat. We can even procure you a little milk, for the man comes yowling regularly at the stroke of seven. I wish to heaven I were better, cheerfuller; but I take heaven to witness I will be as cheerful as I can. I will do what is in me, and swim with myself and thee. I do not think the waves can swallow us. Open thy heart out again to me; have hope, courage, softness—not bitterness and hardness—and they shall not swallow us. In any case, what refuge is there but here? Here is the place for my poor Goody; let us sink or swim together.

If I did not know how little advice could profit in such matters, how it even exasperates and makes the case worse, I would pray earnestly in the meantime for that very thing which we so often laugh at in poor Jack—meekness, submission to the will of Heaven. Open thy eyes from those Templand windows. The earth is green, jewelled with many a flower. The sky arches itself, also beautiful, overhead. It is not, in the name of God, a place of bitter hopelessness for any living creature, but it is emphatically the place of hope for all. Oh! that Edinburgh style of mockery! Me too with its hard withering influence, its momentary solacement, fataller than any pain, it had wellnigh conducted to Hades and Tophet. But I flung it off, and am alive. Oh that my poor much-suffering Jane had done so too!—flung it off from the very heart for ever—and in soft devoutness of submission

(wherein lies what the man calls the 'divine depth of sorrow') had recognised once that the stern necessity was also the just; that the thing, stronger than we, was also the better—wiser. But I will preach no more. I will pray and wish rather, in my heart of hearts. Nay, I will prophesy too; for nothing shall ever make me believe that a soul so *true* and full of good things can continue strangling itself in that manner, sore, sore, though its perplexities be. Oh my poor lassie, what a life thou hast led!—and I could not make it other. It was to be *that*, and not another.

And so, after all, then, what is to be done but come back again by easy stages, and *do the best we can*? This visit to Scotland will not have been in vain. It exhausts another possibility. It renders one quieter. Nay, in spite of all these splashings of rain, weary waitings for some one rising, these annoyances and disappointments, I believe the very change of scene, of habitual speech and course of thought, will be of salutary influence. The din of London is stilled in you by this time. The mind will be fresh to take it up again, and find it more harmonious than it was. . . . *Gehab dich wohl!* Be peaceable, my poor weary shattered bairn. Harden not thy heart, but soften it. Open it to hope and me. Say all that is kind to your mother for me. Forgive her 'ways of doing.' They are *her* ways, though very tormenting.

It is half-past four, and I am still in my dressing-gown. *Addio, carissima.* God be with thee, my wee Goody!

T. CARLYLE.

John came back with the fall of the summer to rejoin Lady Clare, and passed a few more days alone with his brother.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Chelsea: August 24.

Parliament being dissolved, prorogued I believe, there

are no franks. Jack said on Saturday, 'Here is a ticket Lady Clare has sent me; will you not go and see the King prorogue Parliament?' 'Sir,' I answered, 'if he were going to blow up Parliament with gunpowder, I would hardly go, being busy elsewhere.' . . . Lie still, thou poor wearied one. Stir not till the hour come for travelling hither again. After all, I calculate the journey will not prove useless. A healthy influence lies in the very change of ideas and objects—such a total change as that. Seated by our own hearth again, much that was a burble will begin to unravel itself. There are better days coming: I say it always, and swear it, with a kind of indestructible faith. But we must be ready for the bad, for the worse, and meet, not in bitter violence, but in courageous genial humour, as quiet at least as may be. . . .

If a Goody were well, and a *good*, ach Gott, why should we not be happy enough, in spite of twenty poverties? Patience, lassie! let us take it quietly. The book will be done. I shall rest, be better; all will be better. Consider this fact, too, which really has a truth in it. Great sorrow never lasts. It is like a stream stemmed—must begin flowing again. There is really, I say, a truth in that, grounded in the nature of things. Oh my poor bairn, be not faithless, but believing. Do not fling life away as insupportable, despicable, but let us work it out and rest it out together, like a true *two*, though under sore obstructions. Fools in all circumstances, short of Tophet, very probably in Tophet itself, have one way of doing; wise men have a different, infinitely better. I say 'infinitely,' for that also is a fact; and so God direct us and help us! God send thee soon, and safe back again; and so ends my sermon.

It has pleased Carlyle to admit the world behind the scenes of his domestic life. He has allowed us to see that all was not as well there as it might have

been, and in his own generous remorse he has taken the blame upon himself. No one, however, can read these letters, or ten thousand others like them, without recognising the affectionate tenderness which lay at the bottom of his nature. No one also can read between the lines without observing that poverty and dispiritment and the burden of a task too heavy for him was not all that Carlyle had to bear. She on her part, no doubt, had much to put up with. It was not easy to live with a husband subject to strange fits of passion and depression; often as unreasonable as a child, and with a Titanesque power of making mountains out of molehills. But she might have seen more clearly than she did, in these deliberate expressions of his feeling, the soundness of his judgment, and the genuine simple truth and loyalty of his heart. Let those married pairs who never knew a quarrel, whose days run on unruffled by a breeze, be grateful that their lot has been cast in pleasant circumstances, for otherwise their experience will have been different. Let them be grateful that they are not persons of 'genius' or blessed or cursed with sarcastic tongues. The disorder which had driven Mrs. Carlyle to Scotland was mental as well as bodily. The best remedy for it lay, after all, at home; and she came back, as she said, after two months' absence, 'a sadder and a wiser woman.' Carlyle had gone off intending to meet her at the office, but the coach was before its time, or he had mistaken the hour.

I had my luggage (she said) put on the backs of two porters, and walked on to Cheapside, when I presently found

a Chelsea omnibus. By-and-by the omnibus stopped, and amid cries of 'No room, sir; can't get in,' Carlyle's face, beautifully set off by a broad-brimmed white hat, gazed in at the door like the Peri 'who, at the gate of Heaven, stood disconsolate.' In hurrying along the Strand, his eye had lighted on my trunk packed on the top of the omnibus, and had recognised it. This seems to me one of the most indubitable proofs of genius which he ever manifested.

She had returned mended in spirits. John had gone two days before, and was on his way to Italy again, but the effects remained of his cheery presence, and all things were looking better. The article on Mirabeau was printed, and had given satisfaction. The 'Diamond Necklace' was to come out in parts in Fraser, and bring in a little money. Carlyle had never written anything more beautiful; and it speaks indifferently for English criticism that about this, when it appeared, the newspapers were as scornful as they had been about 'Sartor'—a bad omen for the 'French Revolution,' for the 'Diamond Necklace' was a preliminary chapter of the same drama. But the opinions of the newspapers had long become matters of indifference. The financial pressure would be relieved at any rate, and the air in Cheyne Row, within doors and without, was like a still autumn afternoon, when the equinoctials have done blowing. The book was nearly finished. John Carlyle had read the MS. and had criticised. The style had startled him, as the style of 'Sartor' had startled Sterling. Carlyle had listened patiently, and had made some change in deference to his brother's opinion.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: September 12, 1836.

As to what you admonished about style, though you goodnaturedly fall away from it now, there actually was some profit in it, and some effect. It reminds me once more that there are always two parties to a good style—the contented writer and the contented reader. Many a little thing I propose to alter with an eye to greater clearness; but the grand point at present is to get done briefly. I find I have only eighty-eight pages in all, and infinite matter to cram into them. I purpose investigating almost no farther, but dashing in what I already have in some compendious, grandiose, massive way. . . . I really feel very well at present. The joy I anticipate in finishing this book is considerable. Go, thou unhappy book! Thou hast nearly wrung the life out of me. Go in God's name or the Devil's; one will be free after that, and look abroad over the world to see what it holds for one. . . . I am reading Eckermann's 'Conversations with Goethe,' borrowed from Mrs. Austin. It does me great good for the time: such a clear serene enjoyment, so different from this Revolution one; and yet it is not my environment now—will not yield me *Obdach* (shelter) here and now. Goethe is great, brown-visaged, authentic-looking, in this book, yet *räthselhaft* (enigmatic) here and there to me. . . . Enough, enough. Do not conjugate *ennuyer*, dear Jack, if you can help it; conjugate *espérer* rather. Depend upon it, working, trying, is the only remover of doubt. It is an immense truth that. The stream looks so cold, dreary, dangerous. You stand shivering. You plunge in. Behold, it carries you: you can swim. Take my blessing and brotherly prayers with you.

T. C.

As the end of the book came in view, the question—

what next? began to present itself. It was as morning twilight after a long night, and surrounding objects showed in their natural form. Evidently Carlyle did not expect that it would bring him money or directly better his fortunes. All that he looked for was to have acquitted his conscience by writing it: he would then quit literature and seek other work. The alternative, indeed, did not seem to be left to him—literature as a profession, followed with a sacred sense of responsibility (and without such a sense he could have nothing to do with it), refused a living to himself and his wife. For her sake as well as his own, he must try something else. He was in no hurry to choose. His plan, so far as he could form one, was that, as soon as the book was published, his wife should return for a while to her mother. He, like his own Teufelsdröckh, would take staff in hand, travel on foot about the world like a mediæval monk, look about him, and then decide. Ten years before, he had formed large hopes of what he might do and become as a man of letters. He concluded now that he had failed, and the language in which he wrote about it is extremely manly.

Journal.

October 23.—Nothing noted here for a long time. It has grown profitless, wearisome, to write or speak of one so sick, forlorn as myself. Cap. 3 (Girondins) finished about a week ago. Totally worthless, according to my feeling of it. I persist, nevertheless. 'Diamond Necklace' to be printed in 'Fraser.' Sitting for my picture to a man named Lewis, who begged it, 'that it might do him good.' Jane insisted. I at length assented. *Cui bono?* Empty as I am in purse and in hope,

what steads the oil shadow of me in these circumstances? Rather let such a man be altogether suppressed.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: October 29.

Our life is all hanging in the wind—for me, however, against the next spring I have it all so cunningly arranged that, as it were, neither ill luck nor good luck can be other than welcome to me. This is really true and very curious. Such an infinitude of different annoyances and menaces come pressing on me from all points of the compass, that I merely fortify my own chest and rib work, and say, 'Messrs. the Annoyances, do, if you please, make out the result among yourselves; my ribs with heaven's help will not yield, and I shall cheerfully be ready to move whichever way the current goes.' Here, with only literature for shelter, there is, I think, no continuance. Better to take a stick in your hand, and roam the earth Teufelsdröckhlike; you will get at least a stomach to eat bread—even that is denied me here. *Es wollte kein Hund so leben* (no dog would lead such a life). Nor will I. The only rule is silence, uttermost composure, and open eyes. The beggarly economical part of this existence on earth seems to me the more beggarly the longer I look at it; the existence itself the more tragical, sublime. Not a hair of our heads but was given to us by a God.

My chief pity in general, in these circumstances of mine, is for Jane. She hoped much of me; had great faith in me; and has endured much beside me, not murmuring at it. I feel as if I had to swim both for her deliverance and my own. Better health will be granted me; better days for us both.

It is my fixed hope at present either to go to Scotland or to Italy next summer, stick in hand. If any offer occur

to detain me here, it shall be well ; if none, it shall be almost better. This is what I meant above by being balanced amid annoyances and menaces. Therefore be of good cheer, my brave brother. The world shall not beat us, much as it may try. We will make a wrestle or two first at any rate. Thou see'st I am to have done with this sorrowful enterprise of a book, with France and Revolutions for evermore. Then I take stick in hand, silently go to compose my body and soul a little, and so take the world on the other side. I feel strong yet ; as if I had years of strength in me. London has been like a course of mercury to body and mind ; hard enough, but not unmedicative. We will not complain of London, not fear it, not hope from it ; let it go its way, we going ours. If thou prosper at Rome, I may come to thee. If not, why then come thou hither. It shall be good either way.

So the year wore out, and in this humour the 'History of the French Revolution' was finished. The last sentence was written on the 12th of January, 1837, on a damp evening, just as light was failing.[1] Carlyle gave the MS. to his wife to read, and went out to walk. Before leaving the house he said to her: 'I know not whether this book is worth anything, nor what the world will do with it, or misdo, or entirely forbear to do, as is likeliest; but this I could tell the world: You have not had for a hundred years any book that comes more direct and flamingly from the heart of a living man. Do what you like with it, you—.' Five days

[1] So Carlyle said later ; but in the letter to Sterling he says ten o'clock at night. Perhaps he added a word or two.

later he announced the event to Sterling, who was spending the winter at Bordeaux.

To John Sterling.

Chelsea: January 17, 1837.

Five days ago I finished about ten o'clock at night, and was ready both to weep and pray, but did not do either, at least not visibly or audibly. The bookseller has it, and the printer has it; I expect the first sheet to-morrow. In not many more weeks I can hope to wash my hands of it for ever and a day. It is a thing disgusting to me by the faults of it: the merits of which—for it is not without merit—will not be seen for a long time. It is a wild savage book, itself a kind of French Revolution, which perhaps, if Providence have so ordered, the world had better not accept when offered it. With all my heart. What I do know of it is that it has come hot out of my own soul, born in blackness, whirlwind, and sorrow; that no man for a long while has stood, speaking so completely alone, under the eternal azure in the character of man only, or is likely for a long while so to stand: finally, that it has gone as near to choking the life out of me as any task I should like to undertake for some years to come, which also is an immense comfort, indeed the greatest of all.

The Mason's ways are
A type of existence,
And his persistence
Is as the days are
Of men in this world.

The future hides in it
Gladness and sorrow;
We press still thorough,
Naught that abides in it
Daunting us, onward.

And solemn before us
Veiled the dark Portal,
Goal of all Mortals;
Stars silent rest o'er us,
Graves under us silent.

While earnest thou gazest
Comes boding of terror,
Comes phantasm and error,
Perplexes the bravest
With doubt and misgiving.

But heard are the voices,
Heard are the sage's,
The world's, and the age's.
Choose well: your choice is
Brief and yet endless.

Here eyes do regard you
In eternity's stillness,
Here is all fulness,
Ye brave, to reward you.
Work and despair not.[1]

Is not that a piece of psalmody? It seems to me like a piece of marching music to the great brave Teutonic kindred as they march through the waste of time—that section of eternity they were appointed for. *Oben die Sterne und unten die Gräber, &c.* Let us all sing it and march on cheerful of heart. 'We bid you to hope.'[2] So say the voices, do they not?

[1] Goethe's song—

'Die Zukunft decket
Schmerzen und Glück.'

Carlyle gives the original in writing to Sterling. I take Carlyle's own translation from 'Past and Present.'

[2] The literal translation of the last line,

'Wir heissen euch hoffen.

This poem of Goethe's was on Carlyle's lips to the last days of his life. When very near the end he quoted the last lines of it to me when speaking of what might lie beyond. 'We bid you to hope.'

CHAPTER IV.

A.D. 1837. ÆT. 42.

Character of Carlyle's writings—The 'French Revolution' as a work of art—Political neutrality—Effect of the book on Carlyle's position—Proposed lectures—Public speaking—Delivery of the first course—Success, moral and financial—End of money difficulties—Letter to Sterling—Exhaustion—Retreat to Scotland.

I HAVE been thus particular in describing the conditions under which the 'History of the French Revolution' was composed, because this book gave Carlyle at a single step his unique position as an English man of letters, and because it is in many respects the most perfect of all his writings. In his other works the sense of form is defective. He throws out brilliant detached pictures, and large masses of thought, each in itself inimitably clear. There is everywhere a unity of purpose, with powerful final effects. But events are not left to tell their own story. He appears continually in his own person, instructing, commenting, informing the reader at every step of his own opinion. His method of composition is so original that it cannot be tried by common rules. The want of art is even useful for the purposes which he has generally in view; but it interferes with the simplicity of a genuine historical narrative. The 'French Revolution' is not open to this objection. It stands alone in artistic regularity

and completeness. It is a prose poem with a distinct beginning, a middle, an end. It opens with the crash of a corrupt system, and a dream of liberty which was to bring with it a reign of peace and happiness and universal love. It pursues its way through the failure of visionary hopes into regicide and terror, and the regeneration of mankind by the guillotine. It has been called an *epic*. It is rather an Æschylean drama composed of facts literally true, in which the Furies are seen once more walking on this prosaic earth and shaking their serpent hair.

The form is quite peculiar, unlike that of any history ever written before, or probably to be written again. No one can imitate Carlyle who does not sincerely feel as Carlyle felt. But it is complete in itself. The story takes shape as it grows, a definite organic creation, with no dead or needless matter anywhere disfiguring or adhering to it, as if the metal had been smelted in a furnace seven times heated, till every particle of dross had been burnt away. As in all living things, there is the central idea, the animating principle round which the matter gathers and developes into shape. Carlyle was writing what he believed would be his last word to his countrymen. He was not looking forward to fame or fortune, or to making a position for himself in the world. He belonged to no political party, and was engaged in the defence of no theory or interest. For many years he had been studying painfully the mystery of human life, wholly and solely that he might arrive at some kind of truth about it and understand his own duty. He had no belief in the virtue of special 'Constitutions.'

He was neither Tory, nor Whig, nor Radical, nor Socialist, nor any other 'ist.' He had stripped himself of 'Formulas' 'as a Nessus shirt,' and flung them fiercely away from him, finding 'Formulas' in these days to be mostly 'lies agreed to be believed.' In the record of God's law, as he had been able to read it, he had found no commendation of 'symbols of faith,' of church organisation, or methods of government. He wrote, as he said to Sterling, 'in the character of a man' only; and of a man without earthly objects, without earthly prospects, who had been sternly handled by fate and circumstances, and was left alone with the elements, as Prometheus on the rock of Caucasus. Struggling thus in pain and sorrow, he desired to tell the modern world that, destitute as it and its affairs appeared to be of Divine guidance, God or justice was still in the middle of it, sternly inexorable as ever; that modern nations were as entirely governed by God's law as the Israelites had been in Palestine—laws self-acting and inflicting their own penalties, if man neglected or defied them. And these laws were substantially the same as those on the Tables delivered in thunder on Mount Sinai. You shall reverence your Almighty Maker. You shall speak truth. You shall do justice to your fellow-man. If you set truth aside for conventional and convenient lies; if you prefer your own pleasure, your own will, your own ambition, to purity and manliness and justice, and submission to your Maker's commands, then are whirlwinds still provided in the constitution of things which will blow you to atoms. Philistines, Assyrians, Babylonians, were the whips which were provided for

the Israelites. Germans and Huns swept away the Roman sensualists. Modern society, though out of fear of barbarian conquerors, breeds in its own heart the instruments of its punishment. The hungry and injured millions will rise up and bring to justice their guilty rulers, themselves little better than those whom they throw down, themselves powerless to rebuild out of the ruins any abiding city; but powerful to destroy, powerful to dash in pieces the corrupt institutions which have been the shelter and the instrument of oppression.

And Carlyle *believed* this—believed it singly and simply as Isaiah believed it, not as a mode of speech to be used in pulpits by eloquent preachers, but as actual literal fact, as a real account of the true living relations between man and his Maker. The established forms, creeds, liturgies, articles of faith, were but as the shell round the kernel. The shell in these days of ours had rotted away, and men supposed that, because the shell was gone, the entire conception had been but a dream. It was no dream. The kernel could not rot. It was the vital force by which human existence in this planet was controlled, and would be controlled to the end.

In this conviction he wrote his spectral 'History of the French Revolution.' Spectral, for the actors in it appear without their earthly clothes: men and women in their natural characters, but as in some vast phantasmagoria, with the supernatural shining through them, working in fancy their own wills or their own imagination; in reality, the mere instruments of a superior power, infernal or divine, whose awful presence is felt while it is unseen.

To give form to his conception, Carlyle possessed all the qualities of a supreme dramatic poet, except command of metre. He has indeed a metre, or rather a melody, of his own. The style which troubled others, and troubled himself when he thought about it, was perhaps the best possible to convey thoughts which were often like the spurting of volcanic fire; but it was inharmonious, rough-hewn, and savage. It may be said, too, that he had no 'invention.' But he refused to allow that any real poet had ever 'invented.' The poet had to represent truths, not *lies*, or the polite form of lies called fiction. Homer, Dante, believed themselves to be describing real persons and real things. Carlyle 'created' nothing; but with a real subject before him he was the greatest of historical painters. He took all pains first to obtain an authentic account of the facts. Then, with a few sharp lines, he could describe face, figure, character, action, with a complete insight never rivalled except by Tacitus, and with a certain sympathy, a perennial flashing of humour, of which Tacitus has none. He produces a gallery of human portraits each so distinctly drawn, that whenever studied it can never be forgotten. He possessed besides another quality, the rarest of all, and the most precious, an inflexible love of truth. It was first a moral principle with him; but he had also an intellectual curiosity to know everything exactly as it was. Independently of moral objections to lies, Carlyle always held that the fact, if you knew it, was more interesting than the most picturesque of fictions, and thus his historical workmanship is sound to the core. He spared himself no trouble in investigating; and all his effort

was to delineate accurately what he had found. Dig where you will in Carlyle's writings, you never come to water. Politicians have complained that Carlyle shows no insight into constitutional principles, that he writes as if he were contemptuous of them or indifferent to them. Revolutionists have complained of his scorn of Robespierre, and of his tenderness to Marie Antoinette. Catholics find Holy Church spoken of without sufficient respect, and Tories find kings and nobles stripped of their fine clothes and treated as vulgar clay. But Constitutions had no place in Carlyle's Decalogue. He did not find it written there that one form of government is in itself better than another. He held with Pope:—

> For forms of government let fools contest;
> Whate'er is best administered is best.

His sympathies were with purity, justice, truthfulness, manly courage, on whichever side he found them. His scorn was for personal cowardice, or cant, or hollow places of any kind in the character of men; and when nations are split into parties, wisdom or folly, virtue or vice, is not the exclusive property of one or the other.

A book written from such a point of view had no 'public' prepared for it. When it appeared, partisans on both sides were offended; and to the reading multitude who wish merely to be amused without the trouble of thinking, it had no attraction till they learned its merits from others. But to the chosen few, to those who had eyes of their own to see with, and manliness enough to recognise when a living man was speaking to

them, to those who had real intellect, and could therefore acknowledge intellect and welcome it whether they agreed or not with the writer's opinions, the high quality of the 'French Revolution' became apparent instantly, and Carlyle was at once looked up to, by some who themselves were looked up to by the world, as a man of extraordinary gifts; perhaps as the highest among them all. Dickens carried a copy of it with him wherever he went. Southey read it six times over. Thackeray reviewed it enthusiastically. Even Jeffrey generously admitted that Carlyle had succeeded upon lines on which he had himself foretold inevitable failure. The orthodox political philosophers, Macaulay, Hallam, Brougham, though they perceived that Carlyle's views were the condemnation of their own, though they felt instinctively that he was their most dangerous enemy, yet could not any longer despise him. They with the rest were obliged to admit that there had arisen a new star, of baleful perhaps and ominous aspect, but a star of the first magnitude in English literature.

But six months had still to pass before the book could be published, and I am anticipating. Carlyle had been so long inured to disappointment, that he expected nothing from the world but continued indifference. His only anxiety was to be done with the thing, and it had still to be printed and corrected. The economical crisis had been postponed. Life could be protracted at Cheyne Row for another six months on the proceeds of 'Mirabeau' and the 'Diamond Necklace,' and he wrote in fair spirits, to his mother, enclosing a printed page from a proof sheet.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: Jan. 22, 1837.

The book is actually done; all written to the last line; and now, after much higgling and maffling, the printers have got fairly afloat, and we are to go on with wind and sea. There is still a good deal of constant business for me in correcting the press—as much as I can do, we will hope, for they are to print with all the rapidity they are capable of; and I make a good many improvements as we go on, especially in the first volume. It will be six weeks yet, and then the book will be about ready. Take this scrap of print meanwhile as a good omen, like the leaf that Noah's dove brought in the bill of it. I have had a very sore wrestle for two years and a half, but it is over, you see, and the thing is there. I finished on Friday gone a week, really with a feeling of thankfulness, of *waeness* and great gladness. I could almost have *grat*, but did not. Jane treated me to a bread-pudding next day, which bread-pudding I consumed with an appetite got by walking far and wide, I dare say about twenty miles over this 'large and populous city.' My health is really better than anybody could expect. The foundations of this lean frame of mine must be as tough as wire. If I were rested a little, I shall forget the whole thing, and have a degree of freedom and a lightness of heart unknown to me for a long while.

As to the reception the book is like to meet with, I judge that there will be ten enemies of it for one friend; but also that it will find friends by-and-by; in fine, that, as brave old Johnson said, 'useful diligence will at last prevail.' It is not altogether a bad book. For one thing I consider it to be the sincerest book this nation has got offered to it for a good few years, or is like to get for a good few. And so I say to them: 'Good Christian people, there it is. Shriek

over it, since ye will not shout over it. Trample it and kick it, and use it all ways ye judge best. If ye can kill it and extinguish it, then in God's name do. If ye cannot, why then ye will not. My share in it is done.' That is the thing I propose to say within my own mind. One infallible truth, precious for us all, is that I am *shut* of it, and you are shut of it.

Printing a book is like varnishing a picture. Faults and merits both become more conspicuous. Carlyle, who was hard to please with his own work, and had called it worth nothing while in progress, found it in the proofs better than he expected.

It is a book (he said of it again) that makes no complaint about itself, but steps out in a quite peaceable manner, hoping nothing, fearing nothing. Indeed I never knew, till looking at it this second time, what a burly *torque* of a thing it was : a perfect oak clog, which all the hammers in the world will make no impression on. Of human things it is perhaps likest a kind of civilised Andrew Bishop, the old crier of ballads ; the same invincible breadth of body, a shaggy smile on its face, and a depth of voice equal to that of Andrew. Many a man will find it a hard nut to crack ; but it is they that will have to crack it, not I any more.

He made no foul copy of this or of anything that he wrote in these early days. The sentences completed themselves in his head before he threw them upon paper, and only verbal alterations were afterwards necessary; but he omitted many things in his proof sheets, redivided his books and chapters, and sharpened the lights and shadows.

To John Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea: Feb. 17, 1837.

We are got near the hot work of the taking of the Bastille. I call each chapter that was, a book, and have subdivided all these into chapters. The longest list of chapters as yet is *ten*, the shortest *four*. Each chapter has a brief (briefest) title, generally with something of the epigrammatic character in it. Each book, too, has a title, and each volume. The list of these will be the table of contents, without other index or appendage. The notes are merely references. I do not add anything beyond the text. On the other hand I am really conscientious in cutting out. You will be delighted to miss not a few of your old friends. I have divided many a paragraph, many a sentence; and so with chaptering too; have let in a great deal of daylight (of blank, at least) into it; and on the whole it seems to me incredibly improved. I find on a general view that the book is one of the *savagest* written for several centuries. It is a book written by a *wild man*, a man disunited from the fellowship of the world he lives in, looking king and beggar in the face with an indifference of brotherhood and an indifference of contempt. That is really very extraordinary in a respectable country. The critic of a respectable nature cannot but be loud, *falls er nicht schweigt* (unless he says nothing), which really I shall be well content that he do. But I think he will not. In that case I will grant him free scope. There is no word in his belly harder than the words it utters, by implication or directly, about him and his . . . A wild man—pray God it be *a man*, and then buff away, smite and spare not. The thing you can kill, I say always, deserves not to live. On the whole I think it is not Naught, and have it there as a thing done by me. The critics are welcome to lay on. There is a kind of Orson life in it which they will not kill.

Meantime the economic problem, though postponed, was still unsolved. The book was finished, but no money could be expected from it, at least for a considerable time; and, unless something could be done, it was likely that London, and perhaps England, would lose Carlyle just at the moment when they were learning the nature of the man to whom they were refusing ordinary maintenance. His circumstances were no secret. His friends were doubtless aware that he had been invited to lecture in America. A large number of persons, more or less influential, knew vaguely that he was a remarkable man, and some of them cast about for means to prevent such a scandal. One of the most anxious and active, be it recorded to her honour, was Harriet Martineau. This lady had introduced herself into Cheyne Row in the preceding November, as Carlyle had informed his mother.

Two or three days ago (he wrote) there came to call on us a Miss Martineau, whom you have perhaps often heard of in the 'Examiner.'[1] A hideous portrait was given of her in 'Fraser' one month. She is a notable literary woman of her day, has been travelling in America these two years, and is now come home to write a book about it. She pleased us far beyond expectation. She is very intelligent-looking, really of pleasant countenance, was full of talk, though unhappily deaf almost as a post, so that you have to speak to her through an ear-trumpet. She must be some five-and-thirty. As she professes very 'favourable sentiments' towards this side of the street, I mean to cultivate the acquaintance a little.

[1] The 'Examiner' was sent regularly to Carlyle, and by him forwarded to Scotsbrig.

To Miss Martineau, to Miss Wilson, another accomplished lady friend, and to several more, it occurred that if Carlyle could be wanted to lecture in Boston, he might equally well lecture in London. If he could speak as well in public as he could talk in private, he could not fail of success; and money, a little, but enough, might be realised in this way. The Royal Institution was first thought of, but the pay at the Royal Institution was small, and the list, besides, was full for the year. The bold ladies turned their disappointment to better advantage. Carlyle gave a grumbling consent. They canvassed their acquaintance. They found two hundred persons ready each to subscribe a guinea to hear a course of lectures from him in a room engaged for himself only. The 'French Revolution' was not to appear till the summer. That so many lords and ladies and other notabilities should have given their names for such a purpose implies that Carlyle's earlier writings had already made an impression. London society loves novelties, but it expects that the novelties shall be entertaining, and does not go into a thing of this kind entirely on hazard. Carlyle was spared all trouble. All that he had to do was to prepare something to say; and Willis's Rooms were engaged for him, the lectures to begin on May 1. He shuddered, for he hated display, but he felt that he must not reject an opening so opportunely made for him. He had no leisure for any special study, but he was full of knowledge of a thousand kinds. He chose the subject which came most conveniently for him, since he had worked so hard upon it at Craigenputtock—German literature. There were to be six lectures in all. A prospectus was drawn up and

printed, intimating that on such and such days Thomas Carlyle would deliver addresses—

1. On the Teutonic People, the German Language, Ulfilas, the Northern Immigration, and the Nibelungen Lied.

2. On the Minnesinger, Tauler, Reineke Fuchs, the Legend of Faust, the Reformation, Luther, Ulrich von Hutten.

3. On the Master Singers, Hans Sachs, Jacob Böhme, Decay of German Literature, Anton Ulrich Duke of Brunswick, Opitz, Leibnitz.

4. On the Resuscitation of German Literature, Lessing, Klopstock, Gellert, Lavater, Efflorescence of German Literature, Werther, Goetz.

5. On the Characteristics of New-German Literature, Growth and Decay of Opinion, Faust, Philosophy, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Art and Belief, Goethe.

6. On the Drama, Schiller: Pseudo-Drama, Klinger, Kotzebue, Werner: Romance, Tieck, Novalis, Pseudo-Romance, Hoffmann: Poetry and German Literature, Herder, Wieland, the Schlegels, Jean Paul: Results, Anticipations.

A copious bill of fare! A more experienced hand would have spread the subjects of any one of these lectures into the necessary six, watering them duly to the palate of fashionable audiences. But Carlyle, if he undertook anything, chose to do it in a way that he could think of without shame. He was sulky and even alarmed, for he did not intend to *read*. He had undertaken to *speak*, and speak he would, or else fail altogether.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: March 21.

The grand news of all. I am to lecture on German literature in May next. *Ach Gott!* It makes my heart tremble when I think of it; but it is to be done. The Royal Institution having failed, the Wilsons (it was Miss Wilson mainly) determined that we would get an audience of our own and a Willis's Rooms of our own. So they have tickets printed, and a book open at Saunders and Ottley's; and the Marchioness of Lansdowne and honourable women have their names down, and prospectuses circulate; and on the whole, on Monday, May 1, from 3 to 4 o'clock, and five lectures after that, two each week, I am to commence and speak. Heaven knows what I shall say. There will not, with those dilatory printers, be a single moment devotable rightly to preparation. I feel as if I were to be flung overboard and bid swim or drown. On the whole, however, it is best. I have long wished to try that thing, and now it is to be tried. Nay, I am sure farther I can succeed in it with a fair chance. Courage! Swim or drown. . . . This year we are in will probably settle something as to me. I seem as if I were going to make what a servant of ours called 'an *explosure* in the Kent Road, ma'am.' I am driven not to care two straws whether or not. Fortune has had me *aux abois* for a good while, and I have looked defiance in the teeth of her. The longer I live, fame seems to me a more wretched '*Kimmera*,' really and truly a thing to be shied of if it came. I think of Rousseau's case sometimes, and pray God I might be enabled to break whinstone rather, or cut peats, and maintain an unfevered heart. God keep us all, I pray again, from the madness of popularity. I never knew one whom it did not injure. I have known strong men whom it killed.

The mother, of course, had to be informed.

I am to lecture (he wrote to her), actually and bodily to make my appearance. They are gathering an audience of Marchionesses, Ambassadors, ah me! and what not: all going like a house on fire. The comfort is that I know something about the subject, and have a tongue in my head; one way or another doubtless I shall come through.

There was additional anxiety. Mrs. Carlyle in the cold spring weather had caught an influenza, and was seriously ill again.

She has lain there six days (the same letter continued) in great distress, with very little, sometimes with no sleep, coughing considerably. My poor Goody! We have a doctor, a skilful sort of man, I think, the Sterlings' doctor. He looks grave about it, says that at present there is no alarm, but that we must take care. You can fancy me sitting up to the neck in books and papers, and hearing the sore cough on the other side of the wall. I have sent for Mrs. Welsh, or rather I have told her to be getting ready. She will probably come very soon. It is a great blessing that my own health holds out so well.

The alarm about Mrs. Carlyle passed off; a change of weather carried away the influenza; Mrs. Welsh came up, and was most welcome, though the occasion of the summons was gone. All thoughts in Cheyne Row were now directed to the lectures. Carlyle had never spoken in public, save a few words once at a dinner at Dumfries. With all his self-assertion he was naturally a shy man, and only those who are either perfectly unselfconscious or perfectly impudent can look without alarm to a first appearance on a platform. As the ap-

pointed day approached, there was a good deal of anxiety among his friends. Men of high sincerity seldom speak well. It is an art to which they do not incline, being careful about truth, and knowing how difficult it is to adhere to truth in rapid and excited delivery. With skill and training even a sincere man can speak tolerably without telling many lies; but he is weighted heavily against competitors who care for nothing but effect. Carlyle, quoting Goethe, compared speech-making to swimming. It is more like skating. When a man stands on skates upon ice for the first time, his feet seem to have no hold under him; he feels that if he stirs he will fall; he does fall; the spectators laugh; he is ashamed and angry at himself; he plunges off somehow, and finds soon that if he is not afraid he can at least go forward. This much the sincere man arrives at on the platform without extraordinary difficulty; and if he has any truth to utter he can contrive to utter it, so that wise hearers will understand him. The curving and winding, the graceful sweeps this way and that way in endless convolutions, he leaves to the oratorical expert, with whom he has no desire to put himself in competition.

I lie quiet (Carlyle wrote to his mother three days before the exhibition), and have the greatest appetite in the world to do nothing at all. On Monday at three o'clock comes my first lecture, but I mean to take it as coolly as possible. It is neither death nor men's lives, whether I speak well or speak ill or do nothing but gasp. One of my friends was inquiring about it lately. I told him some days ago I could speak abundantly and cared nothing about

it. At other times I felt as if, when the Monday came, the natural speech for me would be this: 'Good Christians, it has become entirely impossible for me to talk to you about German or any literature or terrestrial thing; one request only I have to make, that you would be kind enough to cover me under a tub for the next six weeks and to go your ways with all my blessing.' This were a result well worth remarking; but it is not likely to be this. On the whole, dear mother, fear nothing. One great blessing is that in three weeks it must be done one way or another. It will be over then, and all well.

Nobody could feel assured that something strange might not happen. One acquaintance was afraid he would spoil all by beginning with 'Gentlemen and ladies,' putting the ladies last. It was more likely, his wife said, that he would begin with 'Men and women,' or with 'Fool creatures come hither for diversion.'

In point of fact, Carlyle acted like himself—not like other people, for that he could not do. He had the usual difficulties. Even when he was at ease, his speech, if he was in earnest, was not smooth and flowing, but turbid like a river in a flood. In the lecture-room he had the invariable preliminary fear of breaking down. He had to pause often before words would come, for he was scrupulous to say nothing which he did not mean. When he became excited, he spoke with a broad Annandale accent and with the abrupt manners which he had learnt in his father's house. But the end of it was that the lectures were excellent in themselves and delivered with strange impressiveness. Though unpolished, he was a gentleman in every fibre of him, never to be mis-

taken for anything else; and the final effect was the same as that which was produced by his writings, that here was a new man with something singular to say which well deserved attention. Of the first lecture Carlyle writes:—

There was plenty of incondite stuff, and a furious determination on the poor lecturer's part not to break down. I pitied myself, so agitated, terrified, driven desperate and furious; but I found I had no remedy, necessity compelling.

When all was over, he sent a full account to his brother.

To John Carlyle, Rome.

Chelsea: May 30, 1837.

As to the lectures . . . the thing went off not without effect, and I have great cause to be thankful I am so handsomely quit of it. The audience, composed of mere quality and notabilities, was very humane to me. They seemed indeed to be not a little astonished at the wild Annandale voice which occasionally grew high and earnest. In these cases they sate as still under me as stones. I had, I think, two hundred and odd. The pecuniary net result is 135*l.*, the expenses being great; but the ulterior issues may be less inconsiderable. It seems possible I may get into a kind of way of lecturing, or otherwise speaking direct to my fellow-creatures, and so get delivered out of this awful quagmire of difficulties in which you have so long seen me struggle and wriggle. Heaven be thanked that it is done for this time so tolerably, and we here still alive. I hardly ever in my life had such a moment as that of the commencement when you were thinking of me at Rome. My printers had only ceased the day before. I was wasted and fretted to a thread.

My tongue, let me drink as I would, continued dry as charcoal. The people were there; I was obliged to stumble in and start. *Ach Gott!* But it was got through, and so here we are. Our mother was *black-baised*, though I had written to her to be only *white-baised*. But she read the notice in the 'Times,' and 'wept,' she tells me, and again read it. Jane went to the last four lectures and did not faint.

And now I am delving in the garden to compose myself, and meaning to have things leisurely settled up here, and then start for Scotland. I should much approve of your scheme of our going all in a body. Indeed I have tried it every way, but it will not do. Quiet observation forces on me the conclusion that Jane and her mother *cannot* live together. Very sad and miserable, you will say. Truly, but so it is; and I am further bound to say that the chief blame does verily not lie at our side of the house. Nay, who would be in haste to lay any blame anywhere? But poor Mrs. Welsh, with literally the best intentions, is a person you cannot live with peaceably on any other terms I could ever discover than those of disregarding altogether the whims, emotions, caprices, and conclusions she takes up chameleonlike by the thousand daily. She and I do very well together on these terms: at least I do. But Jane and she cannot live so. Mrs. Welsh seems to think of going off home in a short time. Jane prefers being left here, and thinks that she could even do better without the perpetual pouting and fretting she is tried with.

My own health is not fundamentally hurt. Rest will cure me. I must be a toughish kind of a lath after all; for my life here these three years has been sore and stern, almost frightful; nothing but eternity beyond it, in which seemed any peace. Perhaps better days are now beginning. God be thanked we can still do without such; still and always if so it be. . . . I grow better daily; I delve, as you heard; I

walk much, generally alone through the lanes and parks ; I have lived much alone for a long time, refusing to go anywhere ; finding no pleasure in going anywhere or speaking with anyone.

Mrs. Carlyle was allowed to read this letter with the remarks on her mother, for she adds a P.S.

I do not find that my husband has given you any adequate notion of the success of his lectures ; but you will make large allowance for the known modesty of the man. Nothing that he has ever tried seems to me to have carried such conviction to the public heart that he is a real man of genius, and worth being kept alive at a moderate rate. Lecturing were surely an easier profession than authorship. We shall see. My cough is quite gone, and there is no consumption about me at present. I expect to grow strong, now that he has nothing more to worry him.

Miss Wilson and Miss Martineau had done well for Carlyle with their lecture adventure. They had brought him directly under the public eye at an important moment of his life; but far more than that, they had solved the problem whether it was possible for him to continue in London and follow his trade. 135*l.*, to the modest household in Cheyne Row, was not only, as Carlyle called it, 'financial safety' for a year to come, but it was wealth and luxury. Another course had been promised for the season following, the profits of which could hardly be less, and with a safe income of 150*l.* a year the thrifty pair would feel superior to fortune. At all events the heavy veil on the future had now lifted. There would be no more talk of the

American backwoods, or of a walk over Europe like Teufelsdröckh. No 'roup' need be feared in Cheyne Row, or even such pinch of penury as had been already experienced there. Life and labour were now made possible on honest terms, and literary recognition, if it was to come at all, could be waited for without starvation. It was as if some cursed enchanter's spell had been broken. How the fetters had galled, Carlyle hardly knew till he began to stretch his limbs in freedom. The 'French Revolution' was published immediately afterwards. It was not 'subscribed for' among the booksellers. The author's name was unknown to most of them, and the rest had no belief in him. The book itself, style and matter, was so new, so unlike anything that had ever been seen before, that the few who read it knew not what to say or think. The reviewers were puzzled. Such a fabric could not be appraised at once like a specimen from a familiar loom. The sale at first was slow, almost nothing; but Carlyle was not dissatisfied with the few opinions which reached him. 'Some,' he said, 'condemn me, as is very natural, for affectation; others are hearty, even passionate [as Mill], in their estimation; on the whole, it strikes me as not unlikely that the book may take some hold of the English people, and do them and itself a little good.' One letter especially pleased him. 'Jeffrey,' he said, 'writes to me full of good augury, of praise and blame, and how I shall infallibly be much praised and much blamed, and, on the whole, carry my point: really a kind hearty letter from the little man.' This was well enough, but months would pass before anything could be gathered like a general

verdict; and Carlyle, after the long strain, was sinking into lassitude.

To John Sterling.

Chelsea: June 7, 1837.

Reviews and magazines, and the other Egyptian plagues of what is called literature, do in these days fill me with a kind of sacred horror, equal at least to the plague of frogs; intrusive into your very bread-oven. Seriously, however, I am heartily glad to know that you are writing, publishing in this vehicle or the other. One must take such vehicles as there are. Lay thy manna on the dog's-meat tray, since there is no other, and let the hawker hawk it among his quadrupeds. If by chance a biped pass that way, he will snatch it and appropriate it, thou knowest not how. . . . Verily, this whole world grows magical and hyper-magical to me: death written on all, yet everlasting life also written on all. How Homers, and Mahomets, and Bulwers, and snuffy Socinian preachers, and all people and things that sojourned on earth, go marching, marching, towards the Inane, till, as your boys say, Flop! they are not. . . . I have done nothing of late but dig earth and brick rubbish in this little garden so called, and walk solitary in the lanes, avoiding rather than seeking the face of man. Very spectral I am every way.

Your father and I go along very lovingly, with a sudden broadside of logic now and then, each to show the other that he does carry gunpowder. Smoke over the masthead on these occasions; but it seems to purify the air between us, and then we sail along in the sweetest manner, gentle as babes in the wood.

I met Maurice in the Strand yesterday. He is growing broader, thicker, and gets a clerical air. I know not why I

should not wish him clerical or an English clergyman, yet I never do. His vehement earnestness in twisting such a rope of sand as I reckon that to be, occasions me at times a certain misgiving—written very legible to my eyes stands the doom of that thing.

I cannot say a word to you of the book or of the lectures, except that by the unspeakable blessing of Heaven they are finished. My hearers were mixtiform dandiacal of both sexes, Dryasdustical (Hallam, &c.), ingenuous, ingenious, and grew, on the whole, more and more silent. As to the book, I rather avoid hearing about it; what clash there may be about it, of lamentation, admonition. The style! oh the style!!

You announce that you are rather quitting philosophy and theology—I predict that you will quit them more and more. I give it you as my decided prognosis that the two provinces in question are become Theorem, brain-web and shadow, wherein no earnest soul can find solidity for itself. Shadow, I say; yet the shadow projected from an everlasting reality that is within ourselves. Quit the shadow, seek the reality.

Mill is in better health, still not in good. The set of people he is in, is one that I have to keep out of. No class of mortals ever profited me less. There is a vociferous platitude in them, a mangy hungry discontent; their very joy like that of a thing scratching itself under disease of the itch. Mill was infinitely too good for them; but he would have it, and his fate would. I love him much as a friend frozen in ice for me.[1]

A few days after the date of this letter, Carlyle fled to Scotland fairly broken down. He had fought and

[1] The last two paragraphs are taken from another letter to Sterling, and are added here for brevity.

won his long battle. The reaction had come, and his strangely organised nervous system was shattered. He went by sea from Liverpool to Annan. His brother Alick had come to meet him at Annan pier, and together they walked up to Ecclefechan. The view from the road across the Solway to the Cumberland mountains is one of the most beautiful in the island. The brother having some business in a cottage, Carlyle was left alone leaning on a milestone and looking back on the scene. 'Tartarus itself,' he says, 'and the pale kingdoms of Dis, could not have been more preternatural to me—most stern, gloomy, sad, grand yet terrible, yet steeped in woe.' The spot had been familiar to him from childhood. The impression was not a momentary emotion, but abode with him for many years. Let not the impatient reader call it affectation or exaggeration. If he does, he will know nothing of Carlyle. These spectral visions were part of his nature, and always haunted him when his mind had been overstrained. He stayed at Scotsbrig two months, wholly idle, reading novels, smoking pipes in the garden with his mother, hearing notices of his book from a distance, but not looking for them or caring about them. 'The weather,' he says in a letter, 'after a long miserable spring, is the beautifullest I ever saw. The trees wave peaceful music in front of my window, which is shoved up to the very top. Mother is washing in the kitchen to my left. The sound of Jamie building his peat-stack is audible, and they are storing potatoes down below. . . . My soul's one wish is to be left alone, to hear the rustle of the trees, the music of the burn, and lie vacant, as ugly and stupid as I like. There is

soothing and healing for me in the green solitude of these simple places. I bless myself that the broiling horror of London is far away. A favourable review in the "Chronicle;" a favourable review in the "London and Westminster," &c., &c.—no one of these have I yet set eyes on. I find it at bottom hurtful to look after the like—one has a prurient titillability of that kind extremely despicable, which it is better wholly to steer clear of.'

A very beautiful letter follows, to Sterling.

To John Sterling.

Scotsbrig: July 28, 1837.

There is no idler, sadder, quieter, more *ghostlike* man in the world even now than I. Most weary, flat, stale, seem to me all the electioneerings, and screechings, and jibberings, that the earth is filled with, in these, or indeed in any days. Men's very sorrows, and the tears one's heart weeps when the eye is dry, what is in that either? In an hour, will not death make it all still again? Nevertheless the old brook—Middlebie Burn we call it—still leaps into its '*caudron*' here, gushes clear as crystal through the chasms and dingles of its '*Linn*,' singing me a song with slight variations of score these several thousand years—a song better for me than Pasta's! I look on the sapphire of St. Bees head and the Solway mirror from the gable window. I ride to the top of Blaweary, and see all round from Ettrick Pen to Helvellyn, from Tyndale and Northumberland to Cairnsmuir and Ayrshire. *Voir c'est avoir.* A brave old earth after all, in which, as above said, I am content to acquiesce without quarrel, and, at lowest, hold my peace. One night, late, I rode through the village where I was born. The old kirkyard tree, a huge old gnarled ash, was nestling itself softly

against the great twilight in the north. A star or two looked out, and the old graves were all there, and my father and my sister; and God was above us all.

To his wife he wrote regularly, but in a tone somewhat constrained.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: July 22, 1837.

Many thanks, my dear Bairn, for thy two long lively letters, the faithful reflex of that cockney-land phantasmagory, all glittering and whirling with changeful sights and sounds, from opera soirées to madhouse cells, in which, however, this one satisfactory fact evinces itself, that my poor Jeannie is tolerably well in it and enjoys herself a little there. *Suave mari magno.* I, sitting here on the safe brink, have not had two gladder hours than thy two franks gave me. It is a pity, and perhaps not a pity, that so lively a pen did not turn itself to writing of books. My *coagitor*, too, might become a distinguished female. Nay, after all, who knows? But perhaps we are better as we are, 'probably just as well.' I know not why, did pure Utilitarian intellect rule us, I should write a letter to-day. A newspaper, and two strokes to indicate from the bottom of my ditch that nothing is wrong with me, and a third, if that were at any time needful, to indicate that I do with my whole soul wish you well—this really is the amount of all that, with quires of paper, I could write. I am doing nothing: witnessing nothing. My stupidity is great, my sadness, my tranquillity. Nothing more ghostlike diversifies anywhere the green surface of July in this world. But yet if to anybody on earth, then surely to thee, its partner of good and evil, does the poor worn-out soul of me turn. I will clatter and croak with

thee for an hour. They say I am growing better, looking better. I do believe it is a kind of road towards betterness that I am travelling. This is the sum of all my news. . . . Very generally the history of my day is somewhat thus: Breakfast shortly after such hour as I awake at, any time from seven till nine; shaving, dawdling, reading, smoking, till dinner about two or three; a ride on a little violent walking pony of Jamie's, oftenest to the top of Blaweary, where I have the benefit of total solitude, and a prospect of wide miles of sea and air; then tea, succeeded again by dawdling, smoking, reading, and clatter, till porridge come, and eleven o'clock and sleep. No man need do less. I cannot be said to think of anything. I merely look and drowsily muse. When tide and weather serve, I ride down to bathe. Alick or Mary gets me up some victual, I smoke a pipe, and amble home again.

Spenser's knight, sorely wounded in his fight with the dragon, fell back under the enchanted tree whence

> flowed, as from a well,
> A trickling stream of balm most sovereign.
> Life and long health that gracious ointment gave,
> And deadly wounds could heal, and rear again
> The senseless corse appointed for the grave.
> Into that same he fell which did from death him save.

What that stream was to the bleeding warrior, the poor Annandale farmhouse, its quiet innocence, and the affectionate kindred there, proved then as always to Carlyle, for he too had been fighting dragons and been heavily beaten upon. One more letter may be given, which explains the tone in which he had written to Chelsea.

To John Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: August 12.

Our good mother keeps very well here. She and I have been out once or twice for two hours, helping Jamie with his hay. She is 'waul as an eel' while working. She cooks our little meal which we eat peaceably together. She mends clothes, bakes scons, is very fond of newspapers, especially Radical ones, and stands up for the rights of man. She has toiled on into near the end of the second volume of the 'French Revolution,' not without considerable understanding of it, though the French names are a sad clog. She will make it out pretty completely by-and-by.

Jane represents herself as better than she was, but far enough from well. I do not at all like the state she is in, but I cannot alter it. I try always to hope it will alter. She writes in great spirits; but there is no fund of real cheerfulness. There is not even a serious melancholy visible. My poor Jane!

Cavaignac is angry with me for my treatment of the Sea-green man[1] and *impartialité* generally. I take no side in the matter. How very singular! As to the success of the book I know almost nothing, but suppose it to be considerably greater than I expected. I understand there have been many reviews of a very mixed character. I got one in the 'Times' last week. The writer is one Thackeray, a half-monstrous Cornish giant, kind of painter, Cambridge man, and Paris newspaper correspondent, who is now writing for his life in London. I have seen him at the Bullers' and at Sterling's. His article is rather like him, and I suppose calculated to do the book good.

[1] Robespierre.

CHAPTER V.

A.D. 1837-8. ÆT. 42-43.

Effects of the book—Change in Carlyle's position—Thoughts on the cholera—Article on Sir Walter Scott—Proposals for a collection of miscellanies—Lord Monteagle—The great world—T. Erskine—Literature as a profession—Miss Martineau—Popularity—Second course of lectures—Financial results—Increasing fame.

AUTUMN, as usual, brought back the migratory London flocks, and among them Carlyle. He found his wife better in health, delighted to have him again at her side, and in lightened humour altogether. She knew, though he, so little vain was he, had failed as yet to understand it, that he had returned to a changed position, that he was no longer lonely and neglected, but had taken his natural place among the great writers of his day. Popular he might not be. Popularity with the multitude he had to wait for many a year; but he was acknowledged by all whose judgment carried weight with it to have become actually what Goethe had long ago foretold that he would be—a new moral force in Europe, the extent of which could not be foreseen, but must be great and might be immeasurable. He was still poor, wretchedly poor according to the modern standard. But the Carlyles did not think about standards, and on that score had no more anxieties. He had no work on hand or immediate desire for any. He was able to tell his brother John that, 'having no

book to write in the coming year, he would not feel so fretted and would fret no one else: there would be a cheerfuller household than of old.' An article on Sir Walter Scott had been promised to Mill, and a subject had to be thought of for the next Spring's lectures. Both of these would be easy tasks. Meanwhile, he discovered that his wife was right. 'He was to be considered as a kind of successful man. The poor book had done him real service in truth, had been abundantly reviewed and talked about and belauded; neither, apparently, had it yet done.' He sent to Scotsbrig cheery accounts of himself. 'I find John Sterling here,' he said, 'and many friends, all kinder each than the other to me. With talk and locomotion the days pass cheerfully till I rest and gird myself together again. They make a great talk about the book, which seems to have succeeded in a far higher degree than I looked for. Everybody is astonished at every other body's being pleased with this wonderful performance.'

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: October 9, 1837.

People all say, 'How much better you look!' The grand improvement I trace is that of being far calmer than I was, the immense fuff having subsided into composure. . . I have seen most of my friends that are here. All people are very good to me. Doubt not, dear mother, I shall be able to do better now, have a far better chance. My book has been abundantly reviewed, praised, and discussed. Fraser also tells me it is steadfastly making way. . . . Also I must mention a strange half-daft Edinburgh gentleman that called here last week to congratulate. He however went upon the old

article 'Characteristics,' and *illustrified* us at a great rate; an elder of the Kirk, brimful of religion, a very queer man indeed. At bottom I fancy you, dear mother, apprehensive now that we shall err in the other way, that it will '*tak hal' o' thee, Tom.*' No fear, no fear at all! When one is turned of forty and has almost twenty years of stomach disease to draw upon, there is great safety as to that. A voice from the interior of the liver cries out too sternly 'What's ta use on't?'

In his extremest poverty Carlyle had always contrived his little presents to give his mother comforts which she would never have allowed to herself. Now, feeling himself easy and on the way to what, in his estimate of such things, would be riches, he sent her a more generous offering. 'And what *picture* is this, dear mother?' he said, enclosing a bank note. 'It is to buy you a little keg of ale, and some warm things through the winter. The money I gave you last you gave wholly away again, or almost wholly. It is a thing totally absurd. I beg you to accept this, and I insist upon it; and write me, when you next take up the pen, not useless speech, but an account of all the warm clothings and furnishings Jenny[1] and you have laid in by my order.' Then, as always, Carlyle's generosity was in an 'inverse ratio' to his means. His expenditure on himself was to the last thrifty, even to parsimony, while he scarcely seemed to know what he gave away to others.

John Carlyle, not finding sufficient occupation in attending on Lady Clare, was practising as a physician

[1] The youngest sister, still living at Scotsbrig.

at Rome on his own account. The cholera had broken out there, and he was giving his service gratis among the poor. There were universal terror, selfishness, and inhumanity; the Pope and the Monsignori had shown particular cowardice; the inferior priests had been brave and devoted. John had written about all this to Chelsea.

Men are great blockheads (Carlyle answered) and very miserable. Your letter is a true emblem of a country suffering dreadfully by Heaven's visitation, and still more by its own folly and frenzy. We remember well enough how it was in Dumfriesshire, yet with this difference in our favour, that village was not shut against village, and we had only the madness of fear in an isolated inorganic shape. God preserve you, dear brother, in the midst of these perils! As I used to say to myself, 'Are we not at all times near to *death*, separated from us by a mere film?' God will preserve us till our days and their work are done. Therefore, at least, we will not live in bondage to the vile tyranny of fear. Expose not yourself without duty to do; but with duty again one will dread no exposure. As for you, you had a distinct call to go and seek your daily bread. Would to Heaven it were well over for you all!

Another interesting letter came about the heroism of the poorer clergy, which led to a long reply.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: November 7, 1837.

Danger of death is something; but the madness of mortals under base panic storming round one is more insupportable than any danger. We had reports last week that cholera was

in London too ; but the news did not take. Indeed Cockneydom is too busy to yield lightly to panic. Cholera, as I used to tell the gabbling blockheads, holds nothing in it that the pitifullest catarrh, the fall of a roof, the breakdown of a hackney-coach may not hold. Death ! That is the utmost the crash of the whole solar and stellar system could bring on us ; and to that we have been used for 6,000 years now, or nearly so. For the rest we will honour the Jesuits and other poor priests, and pity the Monsignori and the 'Holiness of the Lord,' to whom the faith of a common Russian soldier does not seem to have been vouchsafed in this instance. But it was so at Dumfries too. Only one clergyman dared enter their horror of a hospital there, and he was an old Roman Catholic. Walter Dunlop carried it at length so far that he ventured on praying through a window, with or without benefit. . . . For myself (he goes on now to speak of other things) there is little to be bragged of, but yet nothing specially to be complained of. I feel a great change in me accomplished and going on ; a state of humour in many points new, unnamed, of which in its present state it is above all unpleasant and useless to *speak*. My life is full of sadness, streaked with wild gleamings of a very strange joy, but habitually sad enough. The dead seem as much my companions as the living ; death as much present with me as life. The only wise thing I can do is to hold my tongue and see what will come of it. In regard to temporals, I believe if I had these two, health and impudence, I might make great way here ; but having neither of them, one sees not so well how it will be ; one knows not which may be best. Alas ! I trace in myself such a devilish disposition on many sides, such abysses of self-conceit, disgust and insatiability, I think many times it were better and safer I were kept always sunk, pinched in the ice of poverty and obscurity till death quietly received me and I were at rest. If you call this

hypochondriacal, consider the unutterable discrepancy that lies in these two facts ; a man becoming notable as a light or rushlight of his generation, and possessed of resources to serve him three or four months without an outlook beyond. I suppose I shall have to lecture again in spring, God knows on what. No blessing in the world were dearer to me than that of being allowed now to hold my peace for a twelvemonth. If I had wings I would fly to Italy, fly to Saturn, somewhither where I could be let alone. And yet, dear Jack, through all this black welter of sorrow and imbecility there is verily one glance of improvement very generally discernible, the deep settled invincible determination to be at rest. In my saddest moments I say, 'Well, then, we shall go to ruin, to death if thou wilt. But we will not rage about it ; we will rest. There will be rest then ; I hope, and really almost believe, there is the beginning of a new life for me in this symptom, which is a deep and genuine one.'

His mother need not have been afraid that 'it would tak' hal' o' thee, Tom.' In spite of the 'devilish disposition,' the 'abysses of conceit,' that he spoke of, Carlyle did not mean to be spoilt by becoming notable.

There is nothing I am thankfuller for (he said) than to feel myself pretty well assured that neither the staying out of fame, nor still more the coming of it in any quantity, can at this time do me much mischief. The liveliest image of hell on earth that I can form to myself is that of a poor bladder of a creature, blown up by popular wind, and bound to keep himself blown under pain of torment very severe, and with torment all the while, and the cracking to pieces of all good that was in him. I have looked on this close at hand, and do shudder at it as the sternest doom that can befall a son of Adam. Let me break stones on the highway rather, and be

in my own heart at peace. It is this that I reckon to be the great reward of my fierce fight of these later years. I do feel peaceable, and with a peace not dependent on other men or outward things, but on myself. God be thanked for it, and make it grow!

The Journal, which had been silent for almost a year, now begins to speak again.

Journal.

November 15, 1837.—Not a word written here till now. Jane fell sick (to the extent of terrifying me) in the saddest circumstances every way, directly after.[1] Lecture on German literature, in the first week in May! Horrid misery of that in my then state of nerves! Book out about 1st of June. Jane's mother here. I off to Scotland on the 20th of that month, where I lay like one buried alive till the middle of September, when I returned hither in a kind of dead-alive state, for which there was no name, of which there was no writing. Why chronicle it? The late long effort had really all but killed me; not the writing of the book, but the writing of it amid such sickness, poverty, and despair. The reception of it, everyone says, is good, and *so* good. It may be so; but to me the blessing of blessings is that I am free of it.

Did I not need humbling? Have I not got it? Have I yet got enough of it? That last is the question. I have felt in general as if I should like never to write any line more in the world. Literature! Oh Literature! Oh that Literature had never been devised! Then, perhaps, were I a living man, and not a half-dead enchanted spectre-hunted nondescript.

[1] *i.e.* after the last entry, on March 21.

On the whole, however, resting and 'lazily simmering' will no longer do. This day I must begin writing again—article—bad luck to it—on Sir Walter Scott, for Mill's Review. I return, not like a warrior to his battle-field, but like a galley-slave scourged back by the whip of necessity. Surely in a few years I shall either get out of this dreadful state by some alleviation, or else die and sink under it. I feel in general that my only hope is to die. Take up the oar, however, and tug, since it must be so.

The Scott article was written as it appears unaltered in the 'Miscellanies.' Carlyle was not himself pleased with it, and found the task at one moment *disgusting*. He began it with indifference. The 'steam got up,' and he fell into what he called 'the old, sham happy, nervously excited mood too well known to him.' The world was satisfied, and what such a man as Carlyle had deliberately to say about Scott will always be read with interest; but he evidently did not take to the subject with cordial sympathy. A man so sternly in earnest could never forgive Sir Walter for squandering such splendid gifts on amusing people, and for creating a universal taste for amusement of that description. He did not perhaps improve his humour by reading, while he was writing the paper, the strongest imaginable contrast to the 'Waverley Novels,' Dante's 'Inferno.' He found Dante 'uphill work,' 'but a great and enduring thing.' 'It is worth noting,' he says with a glance at Scott, 'how loth we are to read great works; how much more willingly we cross our legs, back to candles, feet to fire, over some "Pickwick" or lowest trash of that nature. The reason is, we are very indolent, very

wearied, and forlorn, and read oftenest chiefly that we may forget ourselves. Consider what popularity in that case must mean.'

Signs appeared, nevertheless, that the public could now find something, either amusement or instruction, or pleasure of some kind, in Carlyle's own writings. The 'French Revolution' had made an alteration in this respect. The publishers spoke to him about re-printing 'Sartor,' about 'an edition of his collected articles.' The question had become one of terms only, for the risk could be ventured. 'Changed times,' as he half-bitterly observed to his mother. 'Fraser sent for me the other day to propose that he should reprint Teufelsdröckh and my review articles collected into volumes. The wind is changed there at any rate. The last time he heard of Teufelsdröckh he shrieked at the very notion. Seriously it is good news this, an infallible sign that the other book prospers—nay, still better, a sign that I shall either now or at some time get a little cash by these poor scattered papers. I have resolved that Fraser, for his old *scream's* sake and for my own sake, shall not have the printing of the volumes without some very respectable sum of money now, and not screams.'

Sterling had gone abroad again for the winter, and with him the correspondence was renewed. Carlyle was deeply attached to Sterling, and his letters to him are always characteristic. They had disputed, it seems, about Goethe, Sterling refusing, as it seemed, to see Goethe as Carlyle saw him, and holding to the theory common in England about a great intellect with a depraved heart, &c.

To John Sterling.

Chelsea: December 25, 1837.

Nothing can excel my languor, my silent stagnation. In this state I wrote a long rigmarole on Walter Scott, a thing deserving instant fire-death. No mortal could have less wish to speak a syllable about Scott, or indeed about anything in heaven or in earth, than I then and now. But the will of destiny must be obeyed. My sole wish is that I could get to hold my tongue for twelve months to come. It is a wish and almost a necessity, for which I am occasionally devising schemes. . . .

We will go on hoping—the thing I used to call 'desperate hope.' Nay, on the whole, I really do always believe that I am on the way towards peace and health, both of body and mind. I go along like a planet Jupiter with his five belts, which are supposed to be five storm-zones full of tempest, rain, and thunder and lightning, Jupiter himself very tranquilly progressing in the middle of them. There! see if you can do the like. Yon clear Phosphorus smiling always in the sun's face, clear Mercury living always in the Sun's arms, and at a temperature, they say, hotter than redhot iron; such planets, are they not extremely peculiar in the world? . . . As to Goethe, no other man whatever, as I say always, has yet ascertained what Christianity is to us, and what Paganity is, and all manner of other *anities*, and been alive at all points in his own year of grace with the life appropriate to that. This, in brief, is the definition I have always given of the man since I first knew him. The sight of such a man was to me a Gospel of Gospels, and did literally, I believe, save me from destruction outward and inward. We are far parted now, but the memory of him shall be ever blessed to me as that of a deliverer from death. But on the whole—oh John!—what a belief thou hast *in the devil!* I declare

myself an entire sceptic in that faith. Was there, is there, or will there be a great intellect ever heard tell of without first a true and great heart to begin with? Never, if my experience and faith in this God's world have taught me anything at all. Think it not, suspect it not. Worse *blasphemy* I could not readily utter. Nay, look into your own heart, and consider if the devil's name is *darkness*, and that only—*Eigendünkel:* the blackest kind of darkness, and wicked enough for any purpose.

Fear no *seeing* man, therefore. Know that *he* is in heaven, whoever else be not; that the arch-enemy, as I say, is the arch-stupid. I call this my fortieth Church Article, which absorbs into it and covers up in silence all the other thirty-nine.

Internally at his own home things were going brightly with Carlyle. It was the coldest winter remembered in England, Murphy's winter, when the Thames was frozen from Oxford to Reading; but his wife remained well without signs of cough, and from all sides came signs of goodwill for the 'great writer' who was now become famous. Scotsbrig sent its barrels of meal and butter. 'Alick,' who, farming having gone ill with him, had started a shop in Ecclefechan, sent an offering of first-rate tobacco. 'Poor Alick!' his brother said, 'the first of his shop goods: we received them with a most wistful thankfulness glad and wae.' This was no more than usual; but Peers and Cabinet Ministers began to show a wish for a nearer acquaintance with a man who was so much talked of, and a singular compliment was paid him which later history makes really remarkable. 'Some people,' he said, 'are beginning to imitate my style and such like. The "French Revolution" I knew

from the first to be savage, an Orson of a book; but the people have seen that it has a genuineness in it, and in consideration of that have pardoned all the rest. Cœur-de-Lion in the "Times" newspaper, whom some thought me, proves to be Ben Disraeli, they say. I saw three of his things, and thought them rather good, of the grotesque kind.'

Among the established 'great,' the first who held out a hand was Mr. Spring Rice, afterwards Lord Monteagle, then Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Liberal Ministry. Spring Rice was a statesman of the strict official school, not given to Carlylean modes of thinking; but he was ready to welcome a man of genius, however little he might agree with him. His eldest son, Stephen Spring Rice, who died before his father, being untied to officiality, could admire more freely; and one at least of his sisters had been a subscriber to the lectures on German literature. Accordingly there came to Cheyne Row an invitation to an evening party. Carlyle would have refused, but his wife insisted that he should go. 'A brilliant-looking thing it was,' he said, 'all very polite, Marchionesses, &c.,' with feelings exactly like ours, 'as my dear mother said of the foreign persons in Wilhelm Meister.'

But he thought that Scotsbrig would be interested in hearing about the 'fine folks' among whom 'Tom' was beginning to move; so he sent a particular account of the adventure.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: February 15, 1838.

We live quite quietly among a small circle of people who

see us from time to time, yet not so often as usual in the bitter weather. I do not go out much to dinners or soirées; Jane does not go out at all, not even in the daytime, and accordingly has grown very impatient for mild weather again. However, she takes really handsomely to her indoor life, and has not been better, I think, these good many winters. We are generally alone in the evenings, tranquil over our books and papers. What visitors and visiting we have are in the middle of the day. With my will I would go out nowhere in the evening. It never fails to do me more or less harm. My most remarkable party for a great while was at no smaller personage's than—who think you?—the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I went for the curiosity, for the honour of the thing. I could not help thinking: 'Here is the man that disposes annually of the whole revenue of England; and here is another man who has hardly enough cash to buy potatoes and onions for himself. Fortune has for the time made these two tenants of one drawing-room.' The case, I believe, is this: Miss Spring Rice, the Chancellor of the Exchequer's eldest daughter, was one of my German hearers last year, and took a fancy for my notability; so her mother, Lady Theodosia, was obliged to be 'at home' for me. The people were very kind; Spring Rice himself a substantial good-humoured shifty-looking man of fifty. The rooms were genial with heat and light as the sun at noon. There were high dames and distinguished males simmering about like people in the press of a June fair. The whole thing went off very well, and I returned about one in the morning with a headache that served me for more than a day after. 'It will help your lectures,' Jane said. May be so; but in the meantime it has quite hindered my natural sleep and composure.

Windsor Castle was another novelty with which Carlyle made acquaintance, having gone to visit a

young Mr. Edgeworth[1] there. I mention this merely for his characteristic comment.

The Castle and outside are very beautiful indeed, and sufficient to lodge a much larger figure than poor little Queen Victory. The kings hang there all in rows, with their gauderies about them, poor old King William the last, like so many shadows of a dream. Each hovers there for a year or two, and then eternity swallows him, and he lies as straight as old Wull Moor, the Galloway Hushel.[2]

Various other persons he fell in with, some of whom he had known before, some whom he met for the first time. His likes and dislikes of particular individuals throw marked light upon his own character. What he thought of Frederick Maurice has been already seen.

The Maurices (he says again) are wearisome and happily rare. All invitations 'to meet the Maurices' I, when it is any way possible, make a point of declining. One of the most entirely uninteresting men of genius that I can meet in society is poor Maurice to me; all twisted, screwed, wire-drawn, with such a restless sensitiveness, the utmost inability to let nature have fair play with him. I do not remember that a word ever came from him betokening clear recognition or healthy free sympathy with anything. One must really let him alone till the prayers one does offer for him (pure-hearted, earnest creature as he is) begin to take effect.

It was not for his *belief* that Carlyle felt misgivings about Maurice, nor for want of personal respect, but for the strange obliquity of intellect which could think

[1] Frank Edgeworth. See *Life of Sterling*, p. 160.
[2] *Hushel*, 'an old worn-out person or implement.'

tnat black was white, and white because it was black, and the whiter always, the blacker the shade. Genuine belief Carlyle always loved wherever he found it.

Did you ever see Thomas Erskine, the Scotch saint? (he says in writing to his brother John). I have seen him several times lately, and like him as one would do a draught of sweet rustic *mead*, served in cut glasses on a silver tray; one of the gentlest, kindliest, best bred of men. He talks greatly about 'Symbols,' and other Teufelsdröckhiana; seems not disinclined to let the Christian religion pass for a kind of mythus, provided men can retain the spirit of it. . . . On the whole I take up with my old love for the Saints. No class of persons can be found in this country with so much humanity in them, nay, with as much tolerance as the better sort of them have. The tolerance of others is but doubt and indifference. *Touch the thing they do believe and value, their own self-conceit: they are rattlesnakes then.*[1]

Carlyle's regard for Mr. Erskine of Linlathen, and Erskine's for him, ripened into an affection which was never clouded as long as they both lived. Each felt that, however they seemed to differ, they were at one in the great battle of the spirit against the flesh. Mrs. Carlyle admired Erskine too, but scarcely with so entire a regard. She spoke of him generally, in half-playful mockery, as St. Thomas.

On the whole, in this beginning of the year 1838, Carlyle could say of himself: 'I lead a strange dreamy dawnering life at present; in general not a little relieved and quieted, yet with all the old features of Burton's

[1] The italics are mine, for the words—true as any Carlyle ever spoke—deserve them.

"melancholie man:" to-day full of peaceable joy (ah, no! not peaceable entirely; there is a black look through it still), then to-morrow, for no assignable cause, sunk into sadness and despondency. But verily the book has done me great good. It was like a load of fire burning up my heart, which, by Heaven's favour, I have got thrown out of me. Nay, even in my blackest despondencies, when utter obstruction and extinction seem to threaten me, I say, "Well, it shall take my life, but my quiescence it shall spare."' And again, a few days later, to his brother: 'Blessed be God, there is a kind of light-gleam in the inner man of me which whoso will quietly, humbly, silently follow, it shall be well with him. Silently above all. Why, therefore, do I now speak? In a word, oh brother Jack, I do endeavour to thank Heaven for much mercy to me on this side also. Yes, these long years of martyrdom and misery, which I would not suffer again to buy the world, were not utterly in vain. My mood of mind at present is not nearly so wretched. I am *wae*, very *wae* and sad, but entirely peaceable; and such sadness seems almost as good as joy. Deliver me, ye Supreme Powers, from self-conceit; ah! do this, and then what else is your will.'

'Literature,' so the fates had decided, was to remain Carlyle's profession. He had meant to abandon it, but the cord which held him to his desk, though strained, had not broken. Yet it was a 'bad best,' he thought, for any man, more trying to the moral nature, and in his own case, so modestly he rated his powers, less likely to be useful, than any other honest occupation. He would still have gladly entered the public service if

employment had been offered him, as offered it would have been, in any country but England, to a man who had shown ability so marked. He was acknowledged as a man of genius, and in England it is assumed that for a man of genius no place can be found. He is too good for a low situation; he is likely to be troublesome in a higher one; and is thus the one man distinctly unpromotable. *Fœnum habet in cornu*—avoid him above all men. Carlyle had to accept his lot, since such had been ordered for him. But his distaste continued, and extended to other members of the craft who were now courting his acquaintance. He found them *bores*, a class of persons for whom he had the least charity. Even poor Miss Martineau, sincerely as he at heart respected her, was not welcome if she came too often.

Journal.

February 19.—All Saturday sick and nervous. At night Miss Martineau and Darwin. The visit, as most of those from that too happy and too noisy distinguished female, did nothing but make me miserable. She is a formulist, limited in the extreme, and for the present altogether triumphant in her limits. The all-conquering *smallness* of that phenomenon, victorious mainly by its smallness, and which not only waves banners in its own triumph, but insists on your waving banners too, is at times nearly insupportable to me. She said among other things that Jesus Christ had lived, she thought, one of the most 'joyous' lives; that she had once met a man who seemed not to believe fully in immortality. The trivial impious sayings of this extraordinary man were retailed to us at boundless length. Then the martyr character, the hyperprophetic altogether splendid and unspeakable excellence of

Dr. Priestley; the regiment of American great men; the &c. &c. *Ach Gott!* I wish this good Harriet would be happy by herself. . . . A small character, *totus teres atque rotundus*, is at all times very wearisome. Fill it with self-conceit, at least with an expectation of praise greater far than you can give it; with a notion of infallibility which you are forced to contradict inwardly at every turn, and outwardly as often as the necessity of conversation forces you to speak, a character withal that never by any chance utters anything that is new or interesting to you—it may be good, or it may be better and best, but you have a right to say 'it tires me to death. *Schaff es mir vom Halse.*' The good Harriet admires *me* greatly, and is very friendly to me. This is the only contradictory circumstance. The whole cackle and rigmarole of such an existence is absurd to me whenever I see it.

The Speddings [1] here told me of Hartley Coleridge, whom they esteemed a man of real genius—of his falling out of one high possibility down through another lower, till he had become a poor denizen of tap-rooms in the village of Ambleside—sad to hear of. It often strikes me as a question whether there ought to be any such thing as a literary man at all. He is surely the wretchedest of all sorts of men. I wish with the heart occasionally I had never been one. I cannot say I have seen a member of the guild whose life seems to me enviable. A *man*, a Goethe, will be a man on paper too; but it is a questionable life for him. Canst thou alter it? Then act it. Endure it. On with it in silence.

Let young men who are dreaming of literary

[1] Tom and James, sons of Mr. Spedding, of Mirehouse, in Cumberland. Tom Spedding succeeded his father in the family property. James, a friend of Sterling, whose splendid gifts were never adequately unfolded, is known only to the world as the biographer of Bacon.

eminence as the laurel wreath of their existence reflect on these words. Let them win a place for themselves as high as Carlyle won, they will find that he was speaking no more than the truth, and will wish, when it is too late, that they had been wise in time. Literature—were it even poetry—is but the shadow of action; the action the reality, the poetry an echo. The 'Odyssey' is but the ghost of Ulysses—immortal, but a ghost still; and Homer himself would have said in some moods with his own Achilles—

> Βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητεύεμεν ἄλλῳ
> Ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίοτος πολὺς εἴη,
> Ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.

> Rather would I in the sun's warmth divine
> Serve a poor churl who drags his days in grief,
> Than the whole lordship of the dead were mine.

Jeffrey, while congratulating his friend on the success of the 'French Revolution,' yet could see 'that the business of an author was not the happiest or the most healthful for a person of Carlyle's temper. Contact with the common things of life would make him more tolerant of a world which if not perfect was better than it had ever been before, and would give him a better chance of mending it, while he despised it less.' But it was not to be, and even to Carlyle authorship was better than idleness. When he was idle the acids ate into the coating of his soul.

He did nothing all the winter. With the spring he had to prepare his second course of lectures.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: March 8, 1838.

Lecturing is coming on. I am to start and try myself again. We have a far better room than last year's: an unexceptionable room, all seated for the purpose, quiet, and lighted from the roof. The only drawback is the distance—three miles from me, and rather out of the beat of our fashionable patrons.[1] I am to give twelve lectures this year, and charge two guineas. If I have a good audience, it will mount up fast—one cannot say as to that—we must just try. The subject is to be the history of literature. I shall have to speak about Greeks and Romans first, then about other nations—in short about the most remarkable books and persons that I know. . . . Wish me good speed, dear mother, and do not fear but I shall get through it not unhandsomely. I have many a good friend here, I do believe. The proportion of scoundrels in London is great; but likewise there is a proportion of better people than you can easily find elsewhere in the great world. Let us keep our hearts quiet, as I say. Let us give no ear to vainglory, to self-conceit, the wretchedest of things, the devil's chief work, I think, here below.

I yesterday dined with Mr. Erskine, a very notable man among the religious people of Scotland, who seems to have taken a considerable fancy for me. He is one of the best persons I have met with for many a long year. We were very cheerful, a small quiet party, and had blithe serious talk. I afterwards, on the way home, went to a *soirée* of Miss Martineau's. There were fat people and fair people, lords and others, fidgeting, elbowing, all very braw and hot. 'What's ta use on't?' I said to myself, and came off early,

[1] The room was in Edward Street, Portman Square.

while they were still arriving, at eleven at night. I go as rarely as I can to such things, for they always do me ill. A book at home is suitabler, with a quiet pipe twice in the evening, innocent spoonful of porridge at ten, and bed at eleven, with such composure as we can.

To the Same.

Chelsea : March 30, 1838.

As for me, I have but one interest in the wind at present, that of my lectures. It is like the harvest of the whole year. I am not quite in such a dreadful fuff about it as I was this time twelvemonth ; but it is again agitating enough, and I think often that if I had any money to live upon, there is no power in the world that would tempt me to such a feat in such circumstances. Perhaps it is so ordered that I have no money, in order to oblige me to open my jaw—I cannot say. I can say only I had infinitely rather continue keeping it shut. But on the whole they have got me a lecture room, and I have drawn up a scheme of my twelve lectures—two lectures a week, six weeks instead of four. The subject is about all things in the world ; the whole spiritual history of man, from the earliest times till now. Among my audience I am likely to have some of the cleverest people in this country ; and *I* to speak to *them*. We will fight it through one way or another. The very pain of it and miserable trembling connected with it is a kind of schooling for one. Thou must not '*tine heart*,' thou must gird thyself into forced composure. This is the season, this and onwards till mid-summer, when London is thronged with people, with meetings and speeches, with dinners, parties, balls and doings. I know not what I should do if I were to become an established *popular*. With the popularity I have it is almost like to be too hard for me at times. Nothing in

nature seems to me more entirely wretched and barren than the life of people, literary and others, that give themselves up to that sort of matter here. I firmly believe it to be the darkest curse God lays upon a man or woman. Carrying the beggar's wallet I take to be bad, but far from *so* bad. The very look of the face of one of these people seems to say, 'Avoid me if thou be wise.' . . . 'Dinna gang to dad tysel' a' abroad,' said Lizzy Herd to Wull once, and I many times remember the precept here. 'To be dadded a' abroad' is precisely the thing I want above all things to avoid.

As to the people I see, . . . the best class of all are the religious people, certain of whom have taken, very strangely, a kind of affection for me, in spite of my contradictions towards them. It teaches me again that the best of this class is the best one will find in any class whatsoever. The Radical members, and ambitious vain political people, and literary people, and fashionable people are to be avoided in comparison. One of the best men I have seen for many a year is Thomas Erskine, a gentleman of great fortune and celebrated in the religious world. Most strange it is how such a man has taken to me. Nay, he has been heard to say that 'very few of them are at bottom so orthodox as Carlyle.' What think you of that?

I tell you nothing of the things they continue to tell me about my book. . . . When grand people and beautiful people pay me grand beautiful compliments, and I grope in my pocket and find that I have so few pounds sterling there to meet my poor wants with, I can but say with Sandy Corrie 'What's ta use on't?' or with the cow in the fable,

Gie me a pickle pease strae.

The first set of lectures Carlyle had been obliged to deliver out of his acquired knowledge, having no leisure

to do more. For the second he prepared carefully, especially the Greek and Roman parts. Classics are not the strong point of an Edinburgh education, and the little which he had learned there was rusty. 'I have read Thucydides and Herodotus,' he wrote in April, 'part of Niebuhr, Michelet, &c., the latter two with small fruit and much disappointment, the former two *not*. I should have several good things to say and do very well were I in health, were I in brass.' But trouble had come into Cheyne Row again. Without any definite ailment, Mrs. Carlyle seemed unwell in mind and body. There was a thought of sending her to Italy when the lectures were over, if there were means to do it. Carlyle even thought of going thither himself, or at any rate of leaving London altogether.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: April 12, 1838.

Jane keeps very quiet, and suffers what is inevitable as well as possible. I fancy Italy, as you say, might be of real service to her. To me also the one thing needful seems that of getting into any tranquil region under or above the sun. Positively at times the whirl of this dusty deafening chaos gets into the insupportable category. There is a shivering precipitancy in me which makes *emotion* of any kind a thing to be shunned. It is my nerves, my nerves. The poor chaos is bad enough, but with nerves one might stand it. . . . There are symptoms of capability to grow a lion by-and-by. *Fluch dem!* Good never lay *there*, lie where it might. Also I imagine it possible I might learn to subsist myself here, earning the small needful of money literally with my heart's blood. You can fancy it with such a nervous system as I

have; the beautiful and brave saying in their sumptuosity here and there. 'Oh Thomas, what an illustrious character thou art!' and Thomas feeling in his breast for comfort and finding bilious fever: in his pocket, and finding emptiness; round him for fellowship, and finding solitude, ghastly and grinning masks. But on the whole I do adhere to one thing, that of *holding my peace*. I really am better too in the inward heart of me. There is no danger of man, I feel always, while his heart is not mad. . . .

Going through the Green Park yesterday, I saw her little Majesty taking her bit of departure for Windsor. I had seen her another day at Hyde Park Corner, coming in from the daily ride. She is decidedly a pretty-looking little creature: health, clearness, graceful timidity, looking out from her young face, 'frail cockle on the black bottomless deluges.' One could not help some interest in her, situated as mortal seldom was. . . .

In the evening a Bullerian rout. 'Dear Mrs. Rigmarole, the distinguished female; great Mr. Rigmarole, the distinguished male.' Radical Grote was the only novelty, for I had never noticed him before—a man with strait upper lip, large chin, and open mouth (spout mouth); for the rest, a tall man with dull thoughtful brows and lank dishevelled hair, greatly the look of a prosperous Dissenting minister. . . .

Your notions about Rome for us are in their vagueness quite analogous to mine. Jane takes very kindly to your scheme. As for me, I know only that I should infinitely rejoice to be quiet anywhere. I think I will not stay here to have the brain burnt out of me. I will go out of this. Jane likes it far better than I. Indeed, was it not for her, I might quite easily cut and run before long; which at bottom, I admit, were perhaps not good for me.

This letter indicates no pleasant condition of mind,

not a condition in which it could have been agreeable to take to the platform again and deliver lectures. But Carlyle could command himself when necessary, however severe the burden that was weighing upon him. This time he succeeded brilliantly, far better than on his first experiment. The lectures were reported in the 'Examiner' and other papers, and can be recovered there by the curious. He did not himself reprint them, attaching no importance to what he called 'a mixture of prophecy and play-acting.' It will suffice here to observe what he said himself on the subject at the time.

Journal.

May 15, 1838.—Delivered yesterday, at the Lecture Rooms, 17 Edward Street, Portman Square, a lecture on Dante, the fifth there. Seven more are yet to come. A curious audience; a curious business. It has been all mismanaged; yet it prospers better than I expected once. The conditions of the thing! Ah, the conditions! It is like a man singing through a fleece of wool. One must submit; one must struggle and sing even *so*, since not otherwise. . . . I sent my mother off a newspaper. Hunt's criticism no longer friendly; not so in spirit, though still in letter; a shade of spleen in it; very natural, flattering even. He finds me grown to be a something now. His whole way of life is at death-variance with mine. In the 'Examiner' he expresses himself afflicted with my eulogy of *thrift*, and two days ago he had *multa gemens* to borrow two sovereigns of me. It is an unreasonable existence *ganz und gar*. Happily I have next to nothing to do with Hunt, with him or with his. *Felix sit!*

Saturday, *May* 20.—Yesterday lectured on Cervantes and

the Spaniards, a hurried loose flowing but earnest wide-reaching sort of thing, which the people liked better than I. The business is happily half done now. That is the happiest part of it.

May 31.—Lecture on Luther and the Reformation ; then on Shakespeare and John Knox, my best hitherto ; finally on Voltaire and French scepticism, the worst, as I compute, of all. To-morrow is to be Lecture 10 on Johnson, &c. There are then but two remaining. On the Voltaire day I was stupid and sick beyond expression ; also I did not *like* the man, a fatal circumstance of itself. I had to hover vaguely on the surface. The people seemed content enough. I myself felt sincerely disgusted. That is the word. To-morrow perhaps we shall do better. It is one of the saddest conditions of this enterprise to feel that you have missed what you meant to say ; that your image of a matter you had an image of remains yet with yourself, and a false impotent scrawl is what the hearers have got from you. This too has to be suffered, since the attempt was necessary and not possible otherwise. Our audience sits entirely attentive—a most kind audience—and seems to have almost doubled since we began. Courage ! . . . On the Shakespeare day I entered all palpitating, fluttered with sleeplessness and drug-taking, with visitors, and the fatal *et cætera* of things.

News from Jack above a week ago that probably he is not coming to us this summer. Alas ! alas ! I had counted on the true brother to commune with a little ; to break the utter solitude of heart in which I painfully live here. Lonelier probably is no man. *Ay de mi !* and now he is not coming. This also was not to be granted us. He says we must come to Italy for the winter. We think of it. My unhappy sick wife might be benefited by it. For me the cry of my soul is, 'For the love of God let me alone ;' or rather it has ceased to be a cry, and sunk down into a voiceless prayer, which knows it will

not be granted. Hardly a day has passed since I returned hither in autumn last, in which I have not stormfully resolved to myself that I would go out of this dusty hubbub, should I even walk off with the staff in my hands, and no loadstar whatever. My wife, herself seemingly sinking into weaker and weaker health, points out to me always that I cannot go; that I am tied here, seemingly as if to be tortured to death. So in my wild mood I interpret it. Silence on such subjects! Oh! how infinitely preferable is silence! Perhaps, too, my wife is right. Indeed, I myself feel dimly that I have little to look for else than here. Be still, thou wild weak heart, convulsively bursting up against the bars. Silence alone can guide me. Suffer, suffer, if it be necessary so to learn. Last night, weary and worn out with dull blockheadism, chagrin (next to no sleep the night before), I sate down in St. James's Park and thought of these things, looking at the beautiful summer moon, and really quieted myself, became peaceable and submissive for the time—for the time; and afterwards, alas! I was provoked, and in my weak state said foolish words and went sorrowful to bed. I am a feeble fool. Fool, wilt thou never be wise?

The excitement of lecturing, so elevating and agreeable to most men, seemed only to depress and irritate Carlyle. He was anxious about many things, his brain was overwrought, his nerves set on edge. In this condition even his dearest friends ceased to please him. He goes on:—

Breakfast one morning lately at Milnes's, with Landor, Rogers, T. Moore, &c. A brilliant firework of wits, worth being fretted into fever with for once. Dinner that same day, if I remember, 22nd of May, at Marshall's, Grosvenor Street, the wealthiest of houses, the people hearers of mine.

Empson, the Spring Rices, there; Miss Spring Rice, especially, very brilliant, exciting. Such happiness is purchased too dear. Dull dinner the day before yesterday—indeed, *hinc illæ lacrymæ*, for I had a cup of green tea too—at the Wilsons'; Spedding, Maurice, John Sterling, and women. Ah me! Sterling particularly argumentative, babblative, and on the whole unpleasant and unprofitable to me. Memorandum not to dine where he is soon, without cause. He is much spoiled since last year by really no great quantity of praise and flattery; restless as a whirling *tormentum;* superficial, ingenious, of endless semifrothy utterance and argument. Keep out of his way till he mend a little. A finer heart was seldom seen than dwells in Sterling, but, alas! under what conditions? *Ego et Rex meus.* That is the tune we all sing to. Down with ego! Enough written for one day. I am very sickly, but silent.

The lecture course was perhaps too prolonged. Twelve orations such as Carlyle was delivering were beyond the strength of any man who meant every word that he uttered. It ended, however, with a blaze of fireworks—'people weeping' at the passionately earnest tone in which for once they heard themselves addressed. The money result was nearly 300*l.*, after all expenses had been paid. 'A great blessing,' as Carlyle said, 'to a man that had been haunted by the squalid spectre of beggary.' There were prospects of improved finances from other quarters too. Notwithstanding all the talk about the 'French Revolution,' nothing yet had been realised for it in England, but Emerson held out hopes of remittances on the American edition. 'Sartor,' 'poor beast,' as Mrs. Carlyle called it, was at last coming out in a volume,

and there was still a talk of reprinting the essays. But Carlyle was worn out. Fame brought its accompaniments of invitations to dinner which could not be all refused; the dinners brought indigestions; and the dog days brought heat, and heat and indigestion together made sleep impossible. His letters to his brother are full of lamentation, and then of remorse for his want of patience. At the close of a miserable declamation against everything under the sun, he winds up:—

Last night I sat down to smoke in my night-shirt in the back yard. It was one of the beautifullest nights; the half-moon clear as silver looked out as from eternity, and the great dawn was streaming up. I felt a remorse, a kind of shudder, at the fuss I was making about a sleepless night, about my sorrow at all, with a life so soon to be absorbed into the great mystery above and around me. Oh! let us be patient. Let us call to God with our silent hearts, if we cannot with our tongues.

The Italian scheme dissolved. It had been but a vapour which had taken shape in the air for a moment. Cooler weather came. The fever abated, and he was able to send a pleasant account of the finish to his mother the day after all was over. From her he was careful to conceal his unquiet thoughts.

To Margaret Carlyle.

Chelsea: June 12, 1838.

The lectures went on better and better, and grew at last, or threatened to grow, quite a flaming affair. I had people

greeting yesterday. I was quite as well pleased that we *ended* then and did not make any further racket about it. I have too good evidence (in poor Edward Irving's case) what a racket comes to at last, and want for my share to have nothing at all to do with such things. . . . The success of the thing, taking all sides of it together, seems to have been very considerable, far greater than I at all expected. My audience was supposed to be the best, for rank, beauty and intelligence, ever collected in London. I had bonnie braw dames, Ladies this, Ladies that, though I dared not look at them lest they should put me out. I had old men of four score; men middle-aged, with fine steel-grey beards; young men of the Universities, of the law profession, all sitting quite mum there, and the Annandale voice gollying at them. Very strange to consider. They proposed giving me a dinner, some of them, but I declined it. 'Literary Institutions' more than one express a desire that I would lecture for them, but this also (their wages being small and their lecturers generally despicable) I decline. . . . My health did not suffer so much as I had reason to dread. I was awaking at three in the morning when the thing began, but afterwards I got to sleep till seven, and even till eight, and did not suffer nearly so much. I am no doubt shaken and stirred up considerably into a 'raised' state which I like very ill, but in a few days I shall get still enough, and probably even too still. One must work either with long moderate pain or else with short great pain. The short way is best according to my notion.

As usual, the first thought with Carlyle when in possession of his 'riches' was to send a present to Scotsbrig. He enclosed 5*l.* to his mother, to be divided among his sisters and herself, a sovereign to each.

They were to buy bonnets with it, or any other piece of finery, and call them 'The Lecture.' On July 27 he wrote at length to his brother John.

Chelsea: July 27, 1838.

The lectures terminated quite triumphantly. . . . Thank Heaven! It seems pretty generally expected that I am to lecture next year again, and subsequent years, having, as they say, made a new profession for myself. If dire famine drive me, I must even lecture, but not otherwise. Whoever he may be that wants to get into the centre of a fuss, it is not I. Freedom under the blue sky—ah me!—with a bit of brown bread and peace and pepticity to eat it with, this for my money before all the glory of Portman Square, or the solar system itself. But we must take what we can get and be thankful. After the lectures came a series of dinner-work and racketings; came hot weather, coronation uproars, and at length sleeplessness, collapse, inertia, and at times almost the feeling of nonentity. I like that existence very ill; my nerves are not made for it. I corrected a few proof sheets. I read a few books, dull as Lethe. I have done nothing else whatever that I could help, except live. Frequently a little desire for some travel, a notion that change of scene and objects would be wholesome, has come upon me; but in my condition of irresolute imbecility, especially in the uncertainty we stood in as to your movements, nothing could be done. The weather has now grown cool. I find it tolerable enough to lounge at Chelsea for the time. My digestion is very bad; I should say, however, that my heart and life is on the whole sounder than it was last year. Now, too, all is getting very quiet; streets quite vacant within these two weeks. I am not like to stir from this unless driven. As for Jane, she is much improved; indeed, almost well since summer came. She does not wish to stir from her quarters at all. . . .

The Americans are getting out 'Carlyle's miscellanies.' I know not whether I shall not import two hundred copies or so of this edition and save myself the trouble of editing here. The matter is as good as obsolete to me. There is no bread or other profit in it. . . . The Swedenborgians have addressed a small book and letters to me here. The New Catholics are making advances. Jane says I am fated to be the nucleus for all the mad people of my generation. . . .

John Sterling wanted me to accept a dinner from some Cambridge men, then to go with him to Cambridge for three days, then to &c. &c.; lastly, to go this same week down to Julius Hare's and bathe in the sea. The sea was tempting. Hare too, whom I have seen, is a likeable kind of man. But *vis inertiæ* prevailed, and to this, as to all the rest, I answered: 'Impossible, dear Sterling.' Indeed, John is dreadfully locomotive since his return. Some verses printed in Blackwood, and a considerable bluster of Wilson's about them, have sorrowfully discomposed our poor John, and proved what touchy and almost flimsy stuff there must be in him. I love him as before, but keep rather out of his way at present.

Mill is plodding along at his dull Review under dull auspices, restricts himself I fancy to the Fox Taylor circle of Socinian Radicalism—a lamed cause at this time—and very rarely shows face here. His editor, one Robertson, a burly Aberdeen Scotchman of seven-and-twenty, full of laughter, vanity, pepticity, and hope, amuses me sometimes considerably more. He 'desires exceedingly that I would do something for the October number.' My desire that way is faint indeed. How many things in this world do not smell sweet to me! To how many things is one tempted to say with slow emphasis, '*Du Galgenaas!*' (Thou gallows-carrion). There is some relief to me in a word like that. But *pauca verba*, as Nym has it. I told all the people in those lectures of mine

that no speech ever uttered or utterable was worth comparison with silence. John Sterling in particular could not understand that in the least, but has it still sticking in him indigestible.

Your affectionate brother,

T. CARLYLE.

CHAPTER VI.

A.D. 1838-9. ÆT. 43-44.

Visit to Kirkcaldy—Sees Jeffrey—'Sartor'—Night at Manchester—Remittances from Boston—Proposed article on Cromwell—Want of books—London Library—Breakfast with Mouckton Milnes—Third course of Lectures—Chartism—Radicalism—Correspondence with Lockhart—Thirlwall—Gift of a horse—Summer in Scotland—First journey on a railway.

CARLYLE'S annual migrations were like those of Mrs. Primrose from the blue room to the brown—from London to Scotland. Thither almost always, seldom anywhere else. He had meant to stay all through the summer in Chelsea, but an invitation from his friends, the Ferguses at Kirkcaldy, tempted him, and in the middle of August he went by Leith steamer to the old place where he had taught little boys, and fallen in love with Miss Gordon, and rambled with Edward Irving. It was 'melodiously interesting,' he said. He bathed on the old sands. He had a horse which carried him through the old familiar scenes. While at Kirkcaldy he crossed to Edinburgh and called on Jeffrey.

He sat waiting for me at Moray Place. We talked long in the style of literary and philosophic clitter-clatter. Finally it was settled that I should go out to dinner with him at Craigcrook, and not return to Fife till the morrow. At the due hour I joined the Duke[1] at his town house, and we

[1] The Carlyle name for Jeffrey was Duke of Craigcrook.

walked out together as in old times. The Empsons were still there. Mrs. Jeffrey and they welcomed me all alone. The evening was not, on the whole, equal to a good solitary one. The Duke talked immensely, and made me talk ; but it struck me that he was grown weaker. We seemed to have made up our minds not to contradict each other ; but it was at the expense of saying nothing intimate. My esteem for Jeffrey could not hide from me that at bottom our speech was, as I said, clatter. In fact, he is becoming an amiable old fribble, very cheerful, very heartless, very forgettable and tolerable.

After a week or two in Fife he made for Scotsbrig, where news met him that 50*l.* had been sent from America as a royalty on the edition of the 'French Revolution,' and that more would follow. 'What a touching thing is that!' he said. 'One prays that the blessing of him that was *rather ill off* may be with them, these good friends. Courage! I feel as if one might grow to be moderately content with a lot like mine.'

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: September 15, 1838.

Many thanks for those bright little letters you send me. They are the liveliest of letters, which gives me pleasure, because it shows a lively Goody, cheerful and well. They send good news otherwise too, and seem to have the faculty of finding good news to send. . . . Our mother charges me to thank you most emphatically for your letters to her, which made her 'as light as a feather all day.' She says, 'Whatever sort of mother-in-law she be, you are the best of daugh-

ters-in-law.' Such a swift-dispatching little Goody! . . Drive about what you can, and keep your heart light, and be well when I come. . . .

At Edinburgh I wanted a copy of 'Sartor,' 'poor beast!' They had got no copy, had never heard of it, and only then wrote off for some. . . . Depend on it, therefore, my bonny little Bairn, all these vague things they tell thee about 'Sartor' are mere vague blarney; and think further that we will not care a straw whether they are or not. No. A certain fair critic long ago, among the peat bogs, declared 'Sartor' 'to be a work of genius:' and such it is, and shall continue, though no copy of it should sell these hundred years. . . . Alick is not altogether right yet, but much better than formerly. His traffic prospers beyond what could be looked for, and he seems more quieted, reconciled to his allotment. . . . It gives me the strangest feeling to plump suddenly into view of these conditions of existence—hearts so kind, a lot so sequestered, the sweep of Time passing on in these little creeks too, as on the wide sea where I have to navigate. One can say nothing; one's heart is full of unutterabilities. But on the whole life is all great and unutterable: the little Ecclefechan shop, as the grand Napoleon Empire, is embosomed in eternity; a little dream and yet a great reality, one even as the other. Adieu, dear life partner! dear little Goody of me. Be well, and love me. Thine,

T. CARLYLE.

To the Same.

Scotsbrig: September 27, 1838.

MacDiarmid[1] has faithfully paid me nine sovereigns for you for Puttock, which coins I have, or will account for. He has not succeeded well this year for the letting of Puttock,

[1] Agent for Craigenputtock.

but has a better outlook for a near future. A colonel somebody, of Mabie, has the house and game this season, at the easy rate of 4*l.*, there being no game. But he will *preserve* the game this year, and in future years give 10*l.*, and perhaps plague us less about it. As for Goody, she, with MacDiarmid's instalments in her pocket, will really be in funds for the present, able to bind 'Revolution' books and what not—considering the savings bank, too—according to her own sweet will. Nay, there are other funds too, I guess—a letter from your mother, *un*refusable, but which seemed to me to hold cash—a truly monied Goody. . . . I saw Burns's house; the little oblique-angled hut, where the great soul had to adjust itself, and be a king without a kingdom. It seems vacant since the widow's death. Some dirty children sat on the door-sill, and the knocker seemed torn half off. The soul of the man is now happily far away from all that. Jean and Jamie were both as kind as could be. They are prosperous both, I think. Jean received your parcel with great expressions of thankfulness. Mary, too, at Annan was emphatic in her gratitude, in her affectionate remembrance of you—all which was pleasant to hear. . . . At Annan I found Goody's letter, review of 'Sartor,' gift to my mother—all as right as it could be. Thanks to thee, my good wife—though very hot-tempered one. Oh, my dear Jeanie, I have more regard for thee than, perhaps, thou wilt ever rightly know. But let that pass. . . . The Angel, as thou sayest, does stir the waters more ways than one. Surely our better days are still coming. All here salute you right heartily. My mother is proud of her gifts. Ever your own,

T. CARLYLE.

On his way home, in October, he spent a day or two with a sister who had married a Mr. Hanning, in Manchester, and met with an adventure there. He had

been put to sleep in an old bed, which he remembered in his father's house.

I was just closing my senses in sweet oblivion (he said), when the watchman, with a voice like the deepest groan of the Highland bagpipe, or what an ostrich corncraik might utter, groaned out Groo-o-o-o close under me, and set all in a gallop again. Groo-o-o-o ; for there was no articulate announcement at all in it, that I could gather. Groo-o-o-o, repeated again and again at various distances, dying out and then growing loud again, for an hour or more. I grew impatient, bolted out of bed, flung up the window. Groo-o-o-o. There he was advancing, lantern in hand, a few yards off me. 'Can't you give up that noise?' I hastily addressed him. 'You are keeping a person awake. What good is it to go howling and groaning all night, and deprive people of their sleep?' He ceased from that time—at least I heard no more of him. No watchman, I think, has been more astonished for some time back. At five in the morning all was as still as sleep and darkness. At half-past five all went off like an enormous mill-race or ocean-tide. Boom-m-m, far and wide. It was the mills that were all starting then, and creishy[1] drudges by the million taking post there. I have heard few sounds more impressive to me in the mood I was in.

At home he found all well. He arrived at midnight, finding Mrs. Carlyle improved in health, and sitting up for him; himself quite rested, and equal to work again.

I have been eight weeks in Scotland (he noted), looked on the stones of Edinburgh city, wondered whether it was solid or a dream ; then to Annandale, finally drifted back

[1] *creishy*, 'greasy.'

hither—foolish drift log on the sea of accident, where I since lie high and dry not a whit wiser. How many tragedies, epics, Haynes Baily ballads, and 'bursts of Parliamentary eloquence' would it take to utter this one tour by an atrabilian lecturer on things in general?

Evidences were waiting for him that he was becoming a person of consequence notwithstanding. Presents had been sent by various admirers. There was good news from America. The English edition of the 'French Revolution' was almost sold, and another would be called for, while there were numberless applications from review editors for articles if he would please to supply them. Another 50*l.* had come from Boston, and he been meditating an indulgence for himself out of all this prosperity in the shape of a horse, nothing keeping him in health so much as riding; but his first thought was of Scotsbrig and a Christmas gift to his mother, which he sent with a most pretty letter.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: December 29, 1838.

I have realised my American draft of dollars into pounds sterling. I send my dear Mother five off the fore end of it. The kitlin ought to bring the auld cat a mouse in such a case as that—an American mouse. It is very curious that cash should come in that way to good Annandale industry across 3,000 miles of salt water from kind hands that we never saw. . . . 'French Revolution' is going off briskly, and a new edition required. Both from the 'Miscellanies' and it I hope to make a little cash. I understand the method of bargaining better now, and the books do sell—no thanks to booksellers, or even in spite of them. It does not seem at

all likely that I shall ever have much money in this world; but I am not now so terribly hard held as I used to be. Such bitter thrift may perhaps be less imperative by-and-by.

Out of the suggestions made by editors for articles one especially had attracted Carlyle. Mill had asked him to write on Cromwell for the 'London and Westminster.' There is nothing in his journals or letters to show that Cromwell had been hitherto an interesting figure to him. An allusion in one of his Craigenputtock papers shows that he then shared the popular prevailing opinions on the subject. He agreed, however, to Mill's proposal, and was preparing to begin with it when the negotiation was broken off in a manner specially affronting. Mill had gone abroad, leaving Mr. Robertson to manage the Review. Robertson, whom Carlyle had hitherto liked, wrote to him coolly to say that he need not go on, for 'he meant to do Cromwell himself.' Carlyle was very angry. It was this incident which determined him to throw himself seriously into the history of the Commonwealth, and to expose himself no more to cavalier treatment from 'able editors.' His connection with the 'London and Westminster' at once ended.

Have nothing to do with fools (he said). They are the fatal species. Nay, Robertson, withal, is fifteen years younger than I. To be 'edited' by him and by Mill and the Benthamic formula! Oh heavens! It is worse than Algiers and Negro Guiana. Nothing short of death should drive a white man to it.

From this moment he began to think seriously of a

life of Oliver Cromwell as his next important undertaking, whatever he might have to do meanwhile in the way of lectures or shorter papers.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: January 13, 1839.

I dare say I mentioned that I was not intending to work any further at present in the 'Westminster Review,' but to write by-and-by something more to my mind. I have my face turned partly towards Oliver Cromwell and the Covenant time in England and Scotland, and am reading books and meaning to read more for the matter, for it is large and full of meaning. But what I shall make of it, or whether I shall make anything at all, it would be premature to say as yet. The only thing clear is that I have again some notion of writing, which I had not at all last year or the year before—a sign doubtless that I am getting into heart again, and not so utterly bewildered and beaten down as I was at the conclusion of the 'Revolution' struggle. Anything that I write now would tell better than former things, and I think indeed would be pretty sure to bring me in a trifle of money in the long run. . . . You may picture us sitting snug here most evenings in 'stuffed chairs,' in this warm little parlour, reading, or reading and sewing, or talking with some rational visitor that has perhaps dropped in. Some people say I ought to get a horse with my American money before lecture-time, and ride, that I might be in better bodily condition for that enterprise. I should like it right well *if* it were not so dear. We shall see.

Want of books was his great difficulty, with such a subject on hand as the Commonwealth. His Cambridge friends had come to his help by giving him the use of the books in the University Library, and sending them

up for him to read. Very kind on their part, as he felt, 'considering what a sulky fellow he was.' But he needed resources of which he could avail himself more freely. The British Museum was, of course, open to him; but he required to have his authorities at hand, where his own writing-tackle lay round him, where he could refer to them at any moment, and for this purpose the circulating libraries were useless. New novels, travels, biographies, the annual growth of literature which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven—these he could get; but the records of genuine knowledge, where the permanent thoughts and doings of mankind lay embalmed, were to be found for the most part only on the shelves of great institutions, could be read only there, and could not be taken out. Long before, when at Craigenputtock, it had occurred to him that a county town like Dumfries, which maintained a gaol, might equally maintain a public library. He was once at Oxford in the library of All Souls' College, one of the best in England, and one (in my day at least) so little used that, if a book was missed from its place, the whole college was in consternation.[1] Carlyle, looking wistfully at the ranged folios, exclaimed: 'Ah books, books! you will have a poor account to give of yourselves at the day of judgment. Here have you been kept warm and dry, with good coats on your backs, and a good roof over your heads; and whom have ye made any better or any wiser than he was before?' Cambridge, more liberal than Oxford, did lend out volumes with fit securities for their safety, and from this source Carlyle

[1] The Fellows might take books to their rooms, but so seldom did take them there that any other explanation seemed more likely.

obtained his Clarendon and Rushworth; but he determined to try whether a public lending library of authentic worth could not be instituted in London. He has been talked of vaguely as 'unpractical.' No one living had a more practical business talent when he had an object in view for which such a faculty was required. He set on foot an agitation.[1] The end was recognised as good. Influential men took up the question, and it was carried through, and the result was the infinitely valuable institution known as the 'London Library' in St. James's Square. Let the tens of thousands who, it is to be hoped, are 'made better and wiser' by the books collected there remember that they owe the privilege entirely to Carlyle. The germ of it lay in that original reflection of his on the presence of a gaol and the absence of a library in Dumfries. His successful effort to realise it in London began in this winter of 1839.

Meanwhile a third remittance from America on the 'Revolution' brought the whole sum which he had received from his Boston friends to 150*l.* He felt it deeply, for as yet 'not a penny had been realised in England.' In acknowledging the receipt, he said that he had never received money of which he was more proud. 'It had been sent almost by miracle.' He showed the draft to Fraser, his English publisher, and told him he ought to blush.

The poor creature did blush, but what could that serve?

[1] Among the persons whom he tried to interest was Babbage, whom he did not take to. 'Did you ever see him?' he writes to his brother; 'a mixture of craven terror and venomous-looking vehemence; with no chin too—cross between a frog and a viper, as somebody called him.'

He has done with his edition too, all but seventy-five copies. Above a thousand pounds has been gathered from England from that book, but none seems to belong to the writer; it all belongs to other people—the sharks. They charge above 40 per cent., I find, for the mere function of selling a book, the mere *fash* of handing it over the counter.

A strange reflection, to which, however, the publishers have an answer; for if some books sell, others fail, and the successful must pay for the unsuccessful. Without publishers and without booksellers, books could not be brought out at all; and they, too, must 'earn their living.'

Few men cared less about such things than Carlyle did as long as penury was kept from his door. Apart from his business with the London Library, he was wholly occupied with the records of the Commonwealth, and here are the first impressions which he formed.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: February 15, 1839.

I have read a good many volumes about Cromwell and his times; I have a good many more to read. Whether a book will come of it or not—still more, when such will come —are questions as yet. The pabulum this subject yields me is not very great. I find it far inferior in interest to my French subject. But, on the whole, I want to get acquainted with England—a great secret to me always hitherto—and I may as well begin here as elsewhere. There are but two very remarkable men in the period visible as yet—Cromwell and Montrose. The rest verge towards wearisomeness. Indeed, the whole subject is Dutch-built: heavy-bottomed,

with an internal fire and significance indeed, but externally wrapt in buckram and lead. We shall see. In the meanwhile, I have got a large portmanteau of books about the thing from Cambridge. Here they actually stand, sent me by persons whom I never saw; a most handsome and encouraging phenomenon. The visible agent is one Douglas Heath, a promising young barrister, who sometimes comes here; is a Cambridge man, and a zealous reader of mine . . . . . 150*l.* sent by Emerson for the 'French Revolution!' Was any braver thing ever heard of? 150*l.* from beyond the salt sea, while not a sixpence could be realised here in one's own country by the thing! I declare my American friends are right fellows, and have done their affair with effect. It seems I am going to make some cash after all by these books of mine. *Tout va bien;* neither need we now add, *le pain manque.*

Seldom had Carlyle seemed in better spirits than now. For once his outer world was going well with him. He had occasional fits of dyspepsia, which, indeed, seemed to afflict him most when he had least that was real to complain of. He was disappointed about Montrose for one thing. He had intended, naturally enough as a Scotchman, to make a principal figure of Montrose, and had found that he could not, that it was impossible to discover what Montrose was really like. But the dyspepsia was the main evil—dyspepsia and London society, which interested him more than he would allow, and was the cause of the disorder. He was plagued, too, with duties as a citizen.

Journal.

February 22, 1839.—The day is rainy and bad. Jane

gone out, perhaps not very prudently. At seven o'clock I am to dine with the Marshalls. *Me miserum!* Why do I ever agree to go and dine? Were it revealed to me as tuft-hunting, I would instantly give it up for ever. But it seems to be the only chance of society one has. In this kind I have too much already. Lectures coming too, and on Monday I am to dine with a certain Baring; and last week, for two days, I was a special juryman. I am a poor creature. I am no longer so poor, but I do not feel any happiness. I must start up and try to help myself. *Gott hilf mir!*

Monckton Milnes had made his acquaintance, and invited him to breakfast. He used to say that, if Christ was again on earth, Milnes would ask Him to breakfast, and the Clubs would all be talking of the 'good things' that Christ had said. But Milnes, then as always, had open eyes for genius, and reverence for it truer and deeper than most of his contemporaries.

A month ago (Carlyle writes to his brother) Milnes invited me to breakfast to meet Bunsen. Pusey[1] was there, a solid, judicious Englishman, very kind to me. Hallam was there, a broad, old, positive man, with laughing eyes. X. was there, a most jerking, distorted, violent, vapid, brown-gipsy piece of self-conceit and green-roomism. Others there were; and the great hero Bunsen, with red face large as the shield of Fingal—not a bad fellow, nor without talent; full of speech, Protestantism—Prussian Toryism—who zealously inquired my address.

More important by far than any of these to Carlyle was the 'certain Baring' with whom he was to dine at

[1] Not Dr. Pusey, but his elder brother.

Bath House. It is the first notice of his introduction to the brilliant circle in which he was afterwards to be so intimate. Mr. Baring, later known as Lord Ashburton, became the closest friend that he had. Lady Harriet became his Gloriana, or Queen of Fairy Land, and exercised a strange influence over him for good and evil. But this lay undreamed of in the future, when he wrote his account of the dinner. Bunsen was again one of the guests.

It was one of the most elevated affairs I had ever seen; lords, ladies, and other like high personages, several of them auditors of mine in the last lecturing season. The lady of the house, one Lady Harriet Baring, I had to sit and talk with specially for a long, long while—one of the cleverest creatures I have met with, full of mirth and spirit; not very beautiful to look upon.

And again in another letter:—

Lord Mahon was there, a small fashionable Tory, with a beautiful wife. The dinner was after eight, and ruined me for a week. Bunsen did not shine there. The lady hardly hid from him that she feared he was a *bore*. She kept me talking an hour or more upstairs; a clever devil, as Taylor calls her, *belle laide*, full of wit, and the most like a dame of quality of all that I have yet seen.

Even in Carlyle's own home dissipation pursued him. Mrs. Welsh was staying there, and she and her daughter took it into their heads to have an evening party of the established sort, the first and last time, I believe, that such a thing was attempted in that house.

The other week (he says on the 8th of March) Jane audaciously got up a thing called a soirée one evening—that is to say, a party of persons who have little to do except wander through a room or rooms, and hustle and simmer about, all talking to one another as they best can. It seemed to me a most questionable thing for the *Leddy* this. However, she was drawn into it insensibly, and could not get retreated; so it took effect—between twenty and thirty entirely brilliant bits of personages—and really, it all went off in a most successful manner. At midnight I smoked a peaceable pipe, praying it might be long before we saw the like again.

Serious work was somewhat disturbed by these splendours; but, in fact, he was taking life easy, and was not disinclined to enjoy himself.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: March 11, 1839.

I am reading many books, in a languid way, about Cromwell and his time, but any work on this matter seems yet at a great distance from me. The truth is, I have arrived at the turning of a new leaf, and right thankful am I that Heaven enables me to pause a little, and I willingly follow the monition or permission of Heaven. From my boyhood upwards I have been like a creature breathlessly 'climbing a soaped pole;' ruin and the bottomless abyss beneath me, and the pole quite slippery soaped. But now I have got to a kind of notch on the same, and do purpose, by Heaven's blessing, to take my breath a moment there before adventuring further. If I live, I shall probably have farther to go; if not, not—we can do either way. In biliary days (I am apt to be biliary), the devil reproaches me dreadfully,

but I answer, 'True, boy; no sorrier scoundrel in the world than lazy I! But what help? I *love* no subject so as to give my life for it at present. I will not write on any subject, seest thou? but prefer to ripen or rot for a while.'

The lectures had to be provided for, but the subject chosen, the Revolutions of Modern Europe, was one on which Carlyle could speak without special preparation. An English edition of the 'Miscellanies' was coming out at last, and money was to be paid for it. He was thus able to lie upon his oars till Cromwell or some other topic took active possession; and, meanwhile, he had to receive the homage of the world, which began to be offered from unexpected quarters. An account of Count d'Orsay's visit to Cheyne Row is amusingly told by Mrs. Carlyle in the 'Letters and Memorials.' Here is her husband's version of the same sumptuous phenomenon. After speaking of the favourable arrangements for the publication of the 'Miscellanies,' he says:—

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: April 16, 1839.

My heart silently thanks Heaven that I was not tried beyond what I could bear. It is quite a new sensation, and one of the most blessed, that you will actually be allowed to live *not* a beggar. As to the praise, &c., I think it will not hurt me much; I can see too well the meaning of what that is. I have too faithful a dyspepsia working continually in monition of me, were there nothing else. Nevertheless, I must tell you of the strangest compliment of all, which occurred since I wrote last—the advent of Count d'Orsay. About a fortnight ago, this Phœbus Apollo of dandyism, escorted by

poor little Chorley, came whirling hither in a chariot that struck all Chelsea into mute dazzlement with splendour. Chorley's under jaw went like the hopper or under riddle of a pair of fanners, such was his terror on bringing such a splendour into actual contact with such a grimness. Nevertheless, we did amazingly well, the Count and I. He is a tall fellow of six feet three, built like a tower, with floods of dark-auburn hair, with a beauty, with an adornment unsurpassable on this planet; withal a rather substantial fellow at bottom, by no means without insight, without fun, and a sort of rough sarcasm rather striking out of such a porcelain figure. He said, looking at Shelley's bust, in his French accent, 'Ah, it is one of those faces who weesh to swallow their chin.' He admired the fine epic, &c., &c.; hoped I would call soon, and see Lady Blessington withal. Finally he went his way, and Chorley with reassumed jaw. Jane laughed for two days at the contrast of my plaid dressing-gown, bilious, iron countenance, and this Paphian apparition. I did not call till the other day, and left my card merely. I do not see well what good I can get by meeting him much, or Lady B. and demirepdom, though I should not object to see it once, and then oftener if agreeable.

May brought the lectures at the old rooms in Edward Street. They did not please Carlyle, and, perhaps, were not really among his fine utterances. In the 'French Revolution' he had given his best thoughts on the subject in his best manner. He could now only repeat himself, more or less rhetorically, with a varying text. Mrs. Carlyle herself did not think that her husband was doing justice to himself. He was unwell for one thing. But the success was distinct as ever; the audience bursting into ejaculations of surprise and

pleasure. The 'Splendids!', 'Devilish fines!', 'Most trues!', &c., all indicating that on their side there was no disappointment. His own account of the matter indicates far less satisfaction.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: May 26, 1839.

The lectures are over with tolerable *éclat*, with a clear gain of very nearly 200*l.*, which latter is the only altogether comfortable part of the business. My audience was visibly more numerous than ever, and of more distinguished people. My sorrow in delivery was less; my remorse after delivery was much greater. I gave one very bad lecture (as I thought); the last but one. It was on the French Revolution. I was dispirited—in miserable health. My audience, mainly Tory, could not be expected to sympathise with me. In short, I felt, after it was over, like a man that had been robbing henroosts. In which circumstances, I, the day before my finale, hired a swift horse, galloped out to Harrow like a Faust's flight through an ocean of green, went in a kind of rage to the room the next day, and made on Sansculottism itself very considerably the nearest approach to a good lecture they ever got out of me, carried the whole business glowing after me, and ended half an hour beyond my time with universal decisive applause sufficient for the situation.

The 'remorse' was genuine, for Carlyle in his heart disapproved of these displays and detested them. Yet he, too, had become aware of the strange sensation of seeing a crowd of people hanging upon his words, and yielding themselves like an instrument for him to play upon. There is an irresistible feeling of proud delight in such situations. If not intoxicated, he was excited;

and Emerson writing at the same moment to press him to show himself in Boston, he did think for a second or two of going over for the autumn 'to learn the art of extempore speaking.' Had he gone it might have been the ruin of him, for he had all the qualities which with practice would have made him a splendid orator. But he was wise in time, and set himself to a worthier enterprise—not yet Cromwell, but something which stood in the way of Cromwell—and insisted on being dealt with before he could settle upon history. All his life he had been meditating on the problem of the working-man's existence in this country at the present epoch; how wealth was growing, but the human toilers grew none the better, mentally or bodily—not better, only more numerous, and liable, on any check to trade, to sink into squalor and famine. He had seen the Glasgow riots in 1819. He had heard his father talk of the poor masons, dining silently upon water and water-cresses. His letters are full of reflections on such things, sad or indignant, as the humour might be. He was himself a working-man's son. He had been bred in a peasant home, and all his sympathies were with his own class. He was not a revolutionist; he knew well that violence would be no remedy; that there lay only madness and deeper misery. But the fact remained, portending frightful issues. The Reform Bill was to have mended matters, but the Reform Bill had gone by and the poor were none the happier. The power of the State had been shifted from the aristocracy to the millowners, and merchants, and shopkeepers. That was all. The handicraftsman remained where he was, or was sinking, rather, into an unowned Arab, to whom 'freedom'

meant freedom to work if the employer had work to offer him conveniently to himself, or else freedom to starve. The fruit of such a state of society as this was the Sansculottism on which he had been lecturing, and he felt that he must put his thoughts upon it in a permanent form. He had no faith in political remedies, in extended suffrages, recognition of 'the rights of man,' &c.—absolutely none. That was the road on which the French had gone; and, if tried in England, it would end as it ended with them—in anarchy, and hunger, and fury. The root of the mischief was the forgetfulness on the part of the upper classes, increasing now to flat denial, that they owed any duty to those under them beyond the payment of contract wages at the market price. The Liberal theory, as formulated in Political Economy, was that everyone should attend exclusively to his own interests, and that the best of all possible worlds would be the certain result. His own conviction was that the result would be the worst of all possible worlds, a world in which human life, such a life as *human* beings ought to live, would become impossible. People talked of Progress. To him there was no progress except 'moral progress,' a clearer recognition of the *duties* which stood face to face with every man at each moment of his life, and the neglect of which would be his destruction. He was appalled at the contrast between the principles on which men practically acted and those which on Sundays they professed to believe; at the ever-increasing luxury in rich men's palaces, and the wretchedness, without hope of escape, of the millions without whom that luxury could not have been. Such a state of things, he thought, might

continue for a time among a people naturally well disposed and accustomed to submission; but it could not last for ever. The Maker of the world would not allow it. The angry slaves of toil would rise and burn the palaces, as the French peasantry had burnt the châteaux. The only remedy was the old one—to touch the conscience or the fears of those whom he regarded as responsible. He felt that he must write something about all that, though it was not easy to see how or where. Such a message as he had to give would be welcome neither to Liberals nor Conservatives. The Political Economists believed that since the Reform Bill all was going as it should do, and required only to be let alone; the more the rich enjoyed themselves, the more employment there would be, and high and low would be benefited alike. The Noble Lords and gentry were happy in their hounds and their game preserves, and had lost the sense that rank and wealth meant anything save privilege for idle amusement. Not to either of these, nor to their organs in the press, could Carlyle be welcome. He was called a Radical, and Radical he was, if to require a change in the souls, and hearts, and habits of life of men was to be a Radical. But perhaps no one in England more entirely disbelieved every single article of the orthodox Radical creed. He had more in common with the Tories than with their rivals, and was prepared, if such a strange ally pleased them, to let it so appear. 'Guess what immediate project I am on,' he wrote to his brother, when the lectures were over: 'that of writing an article on the working-classes for the "Quarterly." It is verily so. I offered to do the thing for Mill about a year ago. He durst

not. I felt a kind of call and monition of duty to do it, wrote to Lockhart accordingly, was altogether invitingly answered, had a long interview with the man yesterday, found him a person of sense, good-breeding, even kindness, and great consentaneity of opinion with myself on the matter. Am to get books from him to-morrow, and so shall forthwith set about telling the Conservatives a thing or two about the claims, condition, rights, and mights of the working order of men. Jane is very glad, partly from a kind of spite at the *Blödsinnigkeit* of Mill and his wooden set. The Radicals, as they stand now, are dead and gone, I apprehend, owing to their heathen stupidity on this very matter. It is not to be out till autumn, that being the time for things requiring thought, as Lockhart says. I shall have much to read and inquire, but I shall have the thing off my hands, and have my heart clear about it.'

What came of this project will be seen. One result of it, however, was a singular relation which grew up between Carlyle and Lockhart. They lived in different circles; they did not meet often, or correspond often; but Carlyle ever after spoke of Lockhart as he seldom spoke of any man; and such letters of Lockhart's to Carlyle as survive show a trusting confidence extremely remarkable in a man who was so chary of his esteem.

In general society Carlyle was mixing more and more, important persons seeking his acquaintance. He met Webster, the famous American, at breakfast one morning, and has left a portrait of this noticeable politician. 'I will warrant him,' he says, 'one of the stiffest logic buffers and parliamentary athletes anywhere to be met with in our world at present—a grim-

tall, broad-bottomed, yellow-skinned man, with brows like precipitous cliffs, and huge, black, dull, wearied, yet unwearable-looking eyes under them; amorphous projecting nose, and the angriest shut mouth I have anywhere seen. A droop on the sides of the upper lip is quite mastiff-like—magnificent to look upon; it is so quiet withal. I guess I should like ill to be that man's nigger. However, he is a right clever man in his way, and has a husky sort of fun in him too; drawls in a handfast didactic manner about "our republican institutions," &c., and so plays his part.' Another memorable notability Carlyle came across at this time, who struck him much, and the attraction was mutual—Connop Thirlwall, afterwards Bishop of St. David's, then under a cloud in the ecclesiastic world, as 'suspect' of heresy. Of this great man more will be heard hereafter. Their first meeting was at James Spedding's rooms in Lincoln's Inn Fields; 'very pleasant, free and easy, with windows flung up, and tobacco *ad libitum*.' He found the future bishop 'a most sarcastic, sceptical, but strong-hearted, strong-headed man, whom he had a real liking for.' The orthodox side of the conversation was maintained, it seems, by Milnes, 'who gave the party dilettante Catholicism and endured Thirlwall's tobacco.'

One more pleasant incident befell Carlyle before the dog-days and the annual migration. He was known to wish for a horse, and yet to hesitate whether such an indulgence was permissible to a person financially situated as he was. Mr. Marshall, of Leeds, whose name has been already mentioned, heard of it; and Mr. Marshall's son appeared one day in Cheyne Row, with a

message that his father had a mare for which he had no use, and would be pleased if Carlyle would accept her. The offer was made with the utmost delicacy. If he was leaving town, and did not immediately need such an article, they would keep her at grass till he returned. It was represented, in fact, as a convenience to them, as well as a possible pleasure to him. The gift was nothing in itself, for Mr. Marshall was a man of vast wealth; but it was a handsome sign of consideration and good-feeling, and was gratefully recognised as such. The mare became Carlyle's. She was called 'Citoyenne,' after the 'French Revolution.' The expense would be something, but would be repaid by increase of health. Mrs. Carlyle said, 'It is like buying a *laying hen*, and giving it to some deserving person. Accept it, dear!'

A still nearer friend had also been taking thought for his comfort. He was going to Scotland, and this year his wife was going with him. The faithful, thoughtful John had sent 30*l*. privately to his brother Alick at Ecclefechan, to provide a horse and gig, that Carlyle and she might drive about together as with the old *clatch* at Craigenputtock—a beautiful action on the part of John. They went north in the middle of July, going first to Nithsdale to stay with Mrs. Welsh at Templand. Mrs. Welsh, too, had been considering what she could do to gratify her son-in-law, and had invited his mother over from Scotsbrig to meet him. Mrs. Carlyle was not well at Templand, and could not much enjoy herself; but Carlyle was like a boy out of school. He and his old mother drove about in John's gig together, or wandered through the shrubberies,

smoking their pipes together, like a pair of lovers—as indeed they were. Later on, when he grew impatient again, he called the life which he was leading 'sluggish ignoble solitude,' but it was as near an approach as he ever knew to what is meant by happiness. This summer nothing went wrong with him. When the Templand visit was over, he removed to Scotsbrig and there stayed, turning over his intended article. Of letters he wrote few of any interest—chiefly to his brother John, who was thinking of leaving Lady Clare, and of settling in London to be near Cheyne Row. Carlyle's advice to him shows curious self-knowledge.

To John Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: August 13, 1839.

If your lot brought you near me, it would, of course, be a blessing to me—to us both, I dare say; for, though we chaffer and argue a good deal—a good deal too much—yet surely there is good brotherly agreement between us. A brother is a great possession in this world—one of the greatest; yet it would be unwise to make great sacrifices of essentials for the advantage of being close together. Ah me! I am no man whom it is desirable to be too close to—an unhappy mortal—at least, with nerves that preappoint me to continual pain and loneliness, let me have what crowds of society I like. To work is the sole use of living. But we will speculate no longer; above all, we will not complain.

The holiday lasted two months only. 'Wilhelm Meister' was now to be republished, and he was wanted at home. The railway had just been opened from Preston to London; and on this return journey

he made his first experience of the new mode of locomotion.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: September 13, 1839.

The whirl through the confused darkness, on those steam wings, was one of the strangest things I have experienced—hissing and dashing on, one knew not whither. We saw the gleam of towns in the distance—unknown towns. We went over the tops of houses—one town or village I saw clearly, with its chimney heads vainly stretching up towards us—*under* the stars; not under the clouds, but among them. Out of one vehicle into another, snorting, roaring we flew: the likest thing to a Faust's flight on the Devil's mantle; or as if some huge steam night-bird had flung you on its back, and was sweeping through unknown space with you, most probably towards London. At Birmingham, an excellent breakfast, with deliberation to eat it, set us up surprisingly; and so, with the usual series of phenomena, we were safe landed at Euston Square, soon after one o'clock. We slept long and deep. It was a great surprise the first moment to find one did not waken at Scotsbrig. Wretched feelings of all sorts were holding carnival within me. The best I could do was to keep the door carefully shut on them. I sate dead silent all yesterday, working at 'Meister;' and now they are gone back to their caves again.

CHAPTER VII.

A.D. 1839-40. ÆT. 44-45.

Review of Carlyle by Sterling—Article on Chartism offered to Lockhart—Expanded into a book—Dinner in Dover Street—First sight of Dickens—Lectures on Heroes—Conception of Cromwell—Visit from Thirlwall—London Library—Impressions of Tennyson—Reviews—Puseyism—Book to be written on Cromwell.

A PLEASANT surprise waited for Carlyle on his return to London—an article upon him by Sterling in the 'Westminster Review.' Sterling's admiration was steadily growing—admiration alike for his friend's intellect and character. It was the first public acknowledgment of Carlyle's 'magnitude' which had been made. He perhaps remembered that he had expressed some spleen at Sterling in the summer, and a little penitence may have been mixed with his gratitude.

To John Sterling.

Chelsea: September 29, 1839.

. . . Mill says it is the best thing you ever wrote; and, truly, so should I, if you had not shut my mouth. It is a thing all glaring and boiling like a furnace of molten metal:[1] a brave thing, nay a vast and headlong, full of generosity, passionate insight, lightning, extravagance, and Sterlingism—such an article as we have not read for some time past. It will be talked of; it will be admired, condemned, and create

[1] Sterling's article is reprinted by Hare, vol. i. p. 252.

astonishment and give offence far and near. My friend, what a notion you have got of me! I discern certain natural features, the general outline of shape; but it is as one would in the Air Giant of the Hartz, huge as Ophenova, painted there as one finds by sunrise and early vapour—*i.e.* by Sterling's heart impinging on you between himself and the 'Westminster Review.' I do not thank you, for I know not whether such things are good; nay, whether they are not bad and poison to one; but I will still say, there has no man in these islands been so reviewed in my time. It is the most magnanimous eulogy I ever knew one man utter of another man, whom he knew face to face, and saw go grumbling about in coat and breeches, a poor concrete reality very offensive now and then. God help you, my man, with such a huge Brocken Spectre Chimæra, and a lot of cub chimæras sucking at her. I would not be in your shoes for something!

Sterling's appreciation, when read now, rather seems to fall short of the truth than to exceed it. But now is now, and then was then—and a man's heart beats when he learns, for the first time, that a brother man admires and loves him. If Carlyle was proud, he had no vanity, and he allowed no vanity to grow in him. He set himself to his article for Lockhart. He sent for Citoyenne, which had remained till now with Mr. Marshall.

I go out to ride daily (he reported on October 8), sometimes in the Park, sometimes over the river, or somewhere else into the country—sometimes I fall in with some other friend, also riding, and then it is quite cheerful to go trotting together through green lanes, from one open common, with its whin-bushes and high trees, to another. My horse is in

the best order, and does seem to do me good. I will try it out, and see what good comes of it, dear though it be.

Journal.

October 23, 1839.—My riding keeps me solitary. It is all executed at *calling* hours; the hours I used to spend in visiting or wandering about the crowded thoroughfares, looking at the noisy and, to me, irrational, inarticulate spectacle of the streets. Green lanes, swift riding, and solitude—how much more delightful! For two hours every day I have almost an immunity from pain. My poverty, contrasted with the expensiveness of riding, makes me enjoy the thing more; joy on a basis of apprehension; thankfulness kept constantly alive by the insecurity of the thing one is thankful for. My health is not greatly, yet it is perceptibly, improved. I have distinctly less pain in all hours. Had I work to keep my heart at rest, I should be as well off as I have almost ever been. Much solitude is good for me here. Society enough comes to me of its own accord. Too much society is likely to sweep me along with it, ever and anon, that I, too, become a vain repeater of its hearsays, and have no thought or knowledge of my own. How did Goethe work? One should get into a way of profitably occupying every day, even in the vague, uncommanded, unlimited condition I now stand in. Articles, reviews, have lost their charm for me. It seems a mere threshing of dusty straw. This last year, it is very strange, I have for the first time these twelve years—I may say in some measure the first time in my life—been free, almost as free as other men perhaps are, from the bewildering terror of coming to actual want of money. Very strange! a very considerable alleviation. It now seems as if I actually might calculate on contriving some way or other to make bread for myself without begging it.

Under these conditions, and riding every day, Carlyle contrived to finish without fret or fume the hypothetical article for the 'Quarterly'—for the 'Quarterly' as had been proposed, yet, as it grew under his hand, he felt but too surely that in those pages it could find no place. Could the Tory party five-and-forty years ago have accepted Carlyle for their prophet, they would not be where they are now. Heat and motion, the men of science tell us, are modes of the same force, which may take one form or the other, but not both at once. So it is with social greatness. The Noble Lord may live in idleness and luxury, or he may have political power, but he must choose between them. If he prefer the first, he will not keep the second. Carlyle saw too plainly that for him in that quarter there would be no willing audience.

I have finished (he wrote, November 8) a long review article, thick pamphlet, or little volume, entitled 'Chartism.' Lockhart has it, for it was partly promised to him; at least the refusal of it was, and that, I conjecture, will be all he will enjoy of it. Such an article, equally astonishing to Girondins, Radicals, do-nothing Aristocrats, Conservatives, and unbelieving dilettante Whigs, can hope for no harbour in any Review. Lockhart refusing it, I mean to print it at my own expense. The thing has been in my head and heart these ten, some of it these twenty, years. One is right glad to be delivered of such a thing on any terms. No sect in our day has made a wretcheder figure than the Bentham Radical sect. Nature abhors a vacuum—worthy old girl! She will not make a wretched, unsympathetic, scraggy Atheism and Egoism fruitful in her world, but answers to it—'Enough, thou scraggy Atheism! Go thy way, wilt thou?'

It proved as he expected with the 'Quarterly.' Lockhart probably agreed with every word that Carlyle had written, but to admit a lighted rocket of that kind into the Conservative arsenal might have shattered the whole concern. Lockhart 'sent it back after a week, seemingly not without reluctance, saying he dared not.' It was then shown to Mill, who was unexpectedly delighted with it. The 'Westminster Review' was coming to an end. Mill was now willing to publish 'Chartism' in his last number as 'a kind of final shout, that he might sink like the Vengeur with a broadside at the water's edge.' Carlyle might have consented; but his wife, and his brother John, who was in England, insisted that the thing was too good for a fate so ignoble. The 'Westminster Review' was nothing to him, that he should sink along with it. This was his own opinion too, which for Mill's sake he had been ready to waive.

I (he said) offered them this very thing two years ago, the blockheads, and they dared not let me write it then. If they had taken more of my counsel, they need not perhaps have been in a sinking state at present. But they went their own way, and now their Review is to cease: and their whole beggarly unbelieving Radicalism may cease too, if it likes, and let us see whether there be not a believing Radicalism possible. In short, I think of publishing this piece, which I have called 'Chartism,' about the poor, their rights and their wrongs, as a little separate book. Fraser will print it, halving the profits. It may be out probably the end of this month (December 1).

The book was not long, the printers were expeditious,

and before the year was out 'Chartism' was added to the list of Carlyle's published works. The sale was rapid, an edition of a thousand copies being sold immediately—and the large lump of leaven was thrown into the general trough to ferment there and work as it could. 'Meister,' the most unlike it of all imaginable creations, was republished at the same time. The collected 'Miscellanies' were also passing through the press.

It is strange work with me (he said) studying these essays over again. Ten years of my life lie strangely written there. It is I, and it is not I, that wrote all that. They are as I could make them among the peat bogs and other confusions. It rather seems the people like them, in spite of all their crabbedness.

'Chartism' was loudly noticed; 'considerable reviewing, but very daft reviewing.' Men wondered; how could they choose but wonder, when a writer of evident power stripped bare the social disease, told them that their remedies were quack remedies, and their progress was progress to dissolution? The Liberal journals, finding their 'formulas' disbelieved in, clamoured that Carlyle was unorthodox; no Radical, but a wolf in sheep's clothing. Yet what he said was true, and could not be denied to be true. 'They approve generally,' he said, 'but regret very much that I am a Tory. Stranger Tory, in my opinion, has not been fallen in with in these later generations.' Again a few weeks later (February 11): 'The people are beginning to discover that I am not a Tory. Ah, no! but one of the deepest,

though perhaps the quietest, of all the Radicals now extant in the world—a thing productive of small comfort to several persons. They have said, and they will say, and let them say.'

He, too, had had his say. The burden on his soul which lay between him and other work had been thrown off. Now was time to take up the Commonwealth in earnest; but other subjects were again rising between Carlyle and the Commonwealth. One more, and this the final, course of lectures was to be delivered this spring; and it was to contain something of more consequence than its predecessors, something which he could wish to preserve. By the side of *laissez-faire* and 'democracy' in politics there was growing up a popular philosophy analogous to it. The civilisation of mankind, it was maintained (though Mr. Buckle had not yet risen to throw the theory into shape), expanded naturally with the growth of knowledge. Knowledge spread over the world like light, and though great men, as they were called, might be a few inches taller than their fellows, and so catch the rays a few days or years before the rest, yet the rays did not come from them, but from the common source of increasing illumination. Great men were not essentially superior to common men. They were the creatures of their age, not the creators of it, scarcely even its guides; and the course of things would have been very much the same if this or that person who had happened to become famous had never existed. Such a view was flattering to the millions who were to be invited to self-government. It was the natural corollary of the theory that all men were equal and possessed an equal right to have their opinions re-

presented. It was the exact opposite of the opinion of Carlyle, who held that the welfare of mankind depended more on virtue than on scientific discoveries; and that scientific discoveries themselves which were worth the name were achievable only by exceptional truthfulness and manliness. The immense mass of men he believed to be poor creatures, poor in heart and poor in intellect, incapable of making any progress at all if left to their own devices, though with a natural loyalty, if not distracted into self-conceit, to those who were wiser and better than themselves. Every advance which humanity had made was due to special individuals supremely gifted in mind and character, whom Providence sent among them at favoured epochs. It was not true, then or ever, that men were equal. They were infinitely unequal—unequal in intelligence, and still more unequal in moral purpose. So far from being able to guide or govern themselves, their one chance of improvement lay in their submitting to their natural superiors, either by their free will or else by compulsion. This was the principle which he proposed to illustrate in a set of discourses upon 'Heroes and Hero-Worship.' In the autumn he had been reading about the Arabs, which perhaps suggested the idea to him.

Journal.

October 1839.—Arabian Tales by Lane; very pious. No people so religious, except the English and Scotch Puritans for a season. Good man Mahomet, on the whole; sincere; a fighter, not indeed with perfect triumph, yet with honest battle. No mere sitter in the chimney-nook with theories of battle, such as your ordinary 'perfect' characters are. The 'vein of anger' between his brows, beaming black

eyes, brown complexion, stout middle figure ; fond of cheerful social talk—wish I knew Arabic. Cromwell ! How on earth could he be treated ? Begin to see him at times in some measure, even to like him and pity him. *Voyons !* Is the drama altogether dead ? I fear so ; for me at any rate.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea : February 27, 1840.

I am beginning seriously to meditate my course of lectures, and have even, or seem to have, the *primordium* of a subject in me, though not 'nameable' as yet ; and the dinners, routs, callers, confusions inevitable to a certain length. *Ay de mi!* I wish I was far from it. No health lies for me in that for body or for soul. Welfare, at least the absence of *ill* fare and semi-delirium, is possible for me in solitude only. Solitude indeed is sad as Golgotha, but it is not mad like Bedlam. Oh, the devil burn it ! there is no pleasing of you, strike where one will.

'The devil burn it, there is no pleasing of you !' was the saying of an Irish corporal who was flogging some ill-deserver. Whether he hit him high or hit him low, the victim was equally dissatisfied. Carlyle complained when alone, and complained when driven into the world ; dinner parties cost him his sleep, damaged his digestion, damaged his temper. Yet when he went into society no one enjoyed it more or created more enjoyment. The record of adventures of this kind alternates with groans over the consequent sufferings. He was the keenest of observers ; the game was not worth the candle to him, but he gathered out of it what he could. Here is an account of a dinner at the Stanleys' in Dover Street.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: March 17, 1840.

There, at the dear cost of a shattered set of nerves and head set whirling for the next eight-and-forty hours, I did see lords and lions—Lord Holland and Lady, Lord Normanby, &c.—and then, for soirée upstairs, Morpeth, Lansdowne, French Guizot, the Queen of Beauty, &c. Nay, Pickwick, too, was of the same dinner party, though they do not seem to heed him over-much. He is a fine little fellow—Boz, I think. Clear blue, intelligent eyes, eyebrows that he arches amazingly, large protrusive rather loose mouth, a face of most extreme *mobility*, which he shuttles about—eyebrows, eyes, mouth and all—in a very singular manner while speaking. Surmount this with a loose coil of common-coloured hair, and set it on a small compact figure, very small, and dressed à la D'Orsay rather than well—this is Pickwick. For the rest a quiet, shrewd-looking, little fellow, who seems to guess pretty well what he is and what others are. Lady Holland is a brown-skinned, silent, sad, concentrated, proud old dame. Her face, when you see it in profile, has something of the falcon character, if a falcon's bill were straight; and you see much of the white of her eye. Notable word she spake none—sate like one wont to be obeyed and entertained. Old Holland, whose legs are said to be almost turned to *stone*, pleased me much. A very large, bald head, small, grey, invincible, composed-looking eyes, the immense tuft of an eyebrow which all the Foxes have, stiff upper lip, roomy mouth and chin, short, angry, yet modest nose. I saw there a fine old *Jarl*—an honest, obstinate, candid, wholesomely limited, very effectual and estimable old man. Of the rest I will not say a syllable, not even of the Queen of Beauty, who looked rather withered and unwell.

Such scenes might amuse while they lasted; but

shattered nerves for forty-eight hours were a heavy price to pay for them, and they brought no real pleasure. To Mr. Erskine he writes in the middle of it:—

Time does not reconcile me to this immeasurable, soul-confusing uproar of a life in London. I meditate passionately many times to fly from it for life and sanity. The sound of clear brooks, of woody solitudes, of sea-waves under summer suns: all this in one's fancy here is too beautiful, like sad, forbidden fruit. *Cor irrequietum est.* We will wait and see.

More really interesting were letters which came to him from strangers low and high, who were finding in his writings guidance through their own intellectual perplexities. Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, wrote that 'since he had read the "French Revolution" he had longed to become acquainted with its author. He had found in that book an understanding of the true nature of history, such as it delighted his heart to meet with. The wisdom and eloquence of it was such a treasure to him as he had rarely met with, and was not often likely to meet with again.' A poor Paisley weaver thanked him, in a yet more welcome if ill-spelt missive for having taught him that 'man does not live by demonstration, but by faith. The world had been to him for a long time a deserted temple. Carlyle's writings had restored the significance of things to him, and his voice had been as the voice of a beneficent spiritual father.' This was worthier homage than the flattering worship of London frivolity which injured health and temper.

March 30, 1840.—I pass my days under the abominable pressure of physical misery—a man foiled. I mean to ride diligently for three complete months, try faithfully whether in that way my insupportable burden and imprisonment cannot be alleviated into at least the old degree of endurability. And failing that, I shall pray God to aid me in the requisite decisive measures, for positively my life is black and hateful to me. Spent as I am forced to spend it here, I once for all must not and will not continue so. I have serious thoughts of writing my lectures down, then flaming about over both hemispheres with them (too like a Cagliostroccio), to earn so much as will buy the smallest peculium of annuity, whereon to retire into some hut by the seashore, and there lie quiet till my hour come.

'Physical misery' was not the worst, for it was an old failing of Carlyle's that when he was uncomfortable he could not keep it to himself, and made more of it than the reality justified. Long before, when with the Bullers at Kinnaird, he had terrified his family with accounts of his tortures from dyspepsia, and had told them afterwards they should have known that when he cried 'murder' he was not always being killed. His wife suffered perhaps more than he from colds and pains and sleeplessness; when her husband was dilating upon his own sorrows, he often forgot hers, or made them worse by worry. Charming, witty, brilliant, affectionately playful as she naturally was, she had 'a hot temper,' as Carlyle had said, and a tongue, when she was angry, like a cat's, which would take the skin off at a touch. Here is a brief entry in Carlyle's Journal significant of much.

April 28, 1840.—Work ruined for this day. Imprudently expressed complaints in the morning filled all the sky with clouds—portending grave issues? or only inane ones? I am sick and very miserable. I have kept riding for the last two months. My health seems hardly to improve. I have been throwing my lectures upon paper—lectures on Heroes. I know not what will come of them. In twelve days we shall see. 'Miscellanies' out, and 'Chartism' second thousand. If I were a little healthier—ah me! all were well.

Among such elements as these grew the magnificent addresses on great men and their import in this world. Fine flowers will grow where the thorns are sharpest; and the cactus does not lose its prickles, though planted in the kindliest soil. London did not suit Carlyle, but would any other place have suited him better?

Of the delivery of this course of lectures we have a more particular account than of the rest, for he wrote regularly, while they were proceeding, to his mother. The first was on the Hero as God, Odin being the representative figure; Odin, and not Another, for obvious reasons: but in this, as in everything, Carlyle was Norse to the heart.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: May 6, 1840.

First lecture off my hands. I thought I should get something like the tenth part of my meaning unfolded to the good people, and I could not feel that I had got much more. However they seemed content: sate silent, listening as if it had been gospel. I strive not to *heed* my own notions of the thing, *to keep down the conceit and ambition of me*, for that

is it. I was not in good trim. I had awoke at 4½. My room was considerably fuller than ever before—the bonniest and brawest of people. What more could the human mind require of such a business? I fancy, being once fairly *into* the subject, I shall do a thought better, perhaps, on Friday, though Mahomet is not a very intimate friend to any of us. . . . I will make a book of it perhaps, and be hanged to them! What the newspapers say for or against, or whether they say anything, appears to be of no consequence at all.

May 9.—I gave my second lecture yesterday [1] to a larger audience than ever, and with all the success, or more, that was necessary for me. It was on Mahomet. I had bishops and all kinds of people among my hearers. I gave them to know that the poor Arab had points about him which it were good for all of them to imitate; that probably *they* were more of quacks than he; that, in short, it was altogether a new kind of thing they were hearing to-day. The people seemed greatly astonished and greatly pleased. I vomited it forth on them like wild Annandale grapeshot. They laughed, applauded, &c. In short, it was all right, and I suppose it was by much the best lecture I shall have the luck to give this time; for really it all depends on what we call luck. I cannot say in the least whether my lecture will be good or bad when I begin to deliver it. So far it is well enough. And now, alas! as the price of a good lecture my nerves are thrown into such a flurry that I got little sleep last night, and am all out of sorts to-day. . . . Two weeks more and the sore business is done, and perhaps I shall never try it another time. My audience is between two and three hundred, and grew a great deal larger after the first lecture. I expect to clear 200*l.* out of it. That is the result, and next year I hope I may be able to dispense with that aid, since

[1] The Hero as Prophet; Mahomet.

it must be purchased with *such a tirrivee*, which I like so ill.

The third and fourth lectures were on the Hero as Poet, Dante and Shakespeare being the representatives; and the Hero as Priest, with Luther and Knox.

May 20.—Fifth lecture[1] delivered yesterday. Jane says, and indeed I rather think it is true, that these last two lectures are among the best I ever gave (she says the very best, but I do not think that); and certainly they have not done me nearly so much mischief as the others were wont. I feel great pain and anxiety till I get them done on the day when they are to be done; but no excessive shattering of myself to pieces in consequence of that. The thing seems a thing I could learn to stand by-and-by. Besides I am telling the people matters that belong much more to myself this year, which is far more interesting to me. I fancy myself to be perhaps offending this man to-day, and that man another day, but I say, 'No help for it, friends; you must just wait; see how it will turn, and adjust yourselves; if it do not turn well for you, the story must be told,' and so it goes along tolerably well.

May 23.—I got through the last lecture yesterday in very tolerable style,[2] seemingly much to the satisfaction of all parties; and the people all expressed in a great variety of ways much very genuine-looking friendliness for me. I contrived to tell them something about poor Cromwell, and I think to convince them that he was a great and true man, the valiant soldier in England of what John Knox had preached in Scotland. In a word, the people seemed agreed

[1] The Hero as Man of Letters.
[2] The Hero as King.

that it was my best course of lectures, this. And now you see I am handsomely through it, and ought to be very thankful. I will not be in haste to throw myself into such a tumble again. It stirs me all up into ferment, fret, and confusion, such as I hate altogether; and now that I have got some fraction of cash one way and another I can wait. . . . I will keep my horse a while longer, dear as it is, and try a little further whether there is not some good use in it—worth 25 shillings a week—yea or no.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: May 26, 1840.

The lecturing business went off with sufficient *éclat.* The course was generally judged, and I rather join therein myself, to be the bad *best* I have yet given. On the last day—Friday last—I went to speak of Cromwell with a head *full of air;* you know that wretched physical feeling; I had been concerned with drugs, had awakened at five, &c. It is absolute martyrdom. My tongue would hardly wag at all when I got done. Yet the good people sate breathless, or broke out into all kinds of testimonies of good-will; seemed to like very much indeed the huge ragged image I gave them of a believing Calvinistic soldier and reformer. 'Sun-clear, nucleus of intellect and force and faith, in its wild circumambient element of darkness, hypochondriac misery and quasi-madness, in direct communication once more with the innermost deep of things.' In a word, we got right handsomely through. . . . My health is certainly, one would think, better than it was last year; at least, I have far more clearness, vigour of mind; but all secondary symptoms seem as bad as ever—want of sleep, &c. I rush out into the solitary woods and green places. The air is odorous with blossoms; the sight reposes itself on a world of bursting greenness. Three times out in

the Wimbledon region I have heard the cuckoo almost with tears. Thank God I feel as if there did lie a little more in me, as if my continued life and misery was not for no purpose.

This was Carlyle's last appearance on the platform. He never spoke in public again till twenty-six years after, when he addressed the students in Edinburgh. His better nature disapproved of these exhibitions. Writing to Erskine, who had wished to be present at this final course, he said :—

Let all that love me keep far away on occasions of that kind. I am in no case so sorry for myself as when standing up there bewildered, distracted, nine-tenths of my poor faculty lost in terror and wretchedness, a spectacle to men. It is my most ardent hope that this exhibition may be my last of such ; that Necessity, with her bayonet at my back, may never again drive me up thither, a creature more fit for uttering himself in a flood of inarticulate tears than any other way.

He had thought, as has been seen, of repeating the experiment in America. He knew well enough that if he resolutely tried he could succeed. But to succeed he knew also that he would have to part with his natural modesty, the noblest part of him, as of every man. He must part, too, with his love of truth. The orator, in the rush and flow of words, cannot always speak truth, cannot even try to speak truth; for he speaks to an audience which reacts upon him, and he learns as he goes on to utter, not the facts as he knows them to be, but the facts shaped and twisted to please his hearers. He shut his ears therefore to

the treacherous siren, and turned back to his proper function. The lectures on Heroes were to be written out and made into a book. This was the occupation which he had laid out for himself for the summer; and there was to be no change to the North till 'this bit of work was accomplished.'

There was the usual relapse after the excitement, less extreme than in other years, but sufficient to call up his melancholy and morbid humour. On June 3 he writes:—

I rode with Fonblanque of the 'Examiner' one evening; rather poor company. I feel on the whole better alone. No man nor body of men can do much for me, not if they would take all the trouble in the world. Could the whole of them unwrap the baleful Nessus shirt of perpetual pain and isolation in which I am lamed, embated, and swathed as in enchantment till I quit this earth? Not they. Let them go their road. Go thou also in God's name!

Occasionally there came a friend to him of a better type. Under the same date he tells his mother that Thirlwall had been in Cheyne Row to have a talk and smoke with him—'the massive Cantabrigian Scholar and Sceptic,' whom he had twice already fallen in with. Thirlwall, after his difference with the authorities at Cambridge, was now on the eve of promotion to a bishopric. Carlyle was well acquainted with the condition of the 'massive scholar's' thoughts on theological mysteries. He told me that Thirlwall lay three nights awake when the see of St. David's was offered to him, considering whether he was fit for such a place, or the place for him. He did not himself approve of men

acting parts which were not natural to them. How Thirlwall acted his part he had an opportunity of judging when he paid the bishop a visit at his palace. The English Church will probably never again have a prelate of Thirlwall's power or character, and I may mention here another small incident connected with his elevation to the bench. Charles Buller, who had known Thirlwall at Cambridge, told me that he among others had recommended him to Lord Melbourne. 'Yes,' Melbourne said, 'but hang it' (the real word was stronger), 'he is not orthodox in that preface to Schleiermacher.' Buller answered that he thought his friend sufficiently orthodox for the purpose. They adjourned to Melbourne's library, and spent a morning over 'the Fathers,' searching for precedents for Thirlwall's opinions.

Other intruders in Cheyne Row were treated with less respect; for instance—

A wretched Dud called ——, member, I think, for ——, called one day with his wife, a dirty little Atheistic Radical, living seemingly in a mere element of pretentious twaddle with —— and —— and the literary vapidities of his day. Jane says I treated him inhumanly, as a bulldog might some ill-favoured *messin*, for my nerves were shattered asunder by a gallop in the wind. The table lay covered for dinner, and —— took to arguing about the Copyright Bill. One day there stepped in a very curious little fellow, Dr. Thomas Murray,[1] whom you recollect without the Doctor, as of Edinburgh and Literary Galloway. There is hardly any change in the little man. Worldly, egoistic, small, vain, a

[1] Carlyle's early friend and correspondent. See *Forty Years of Carlyle's Life*, &c., vol. i. p. 37.

poor grub in whom perhaps was still some remnant of better instincts, whom one could not look at without impressive reminiscences. He did not come back to me, nor did I want it, though I asked him.

Shortly after Carlyle went to a party at the Dud's whom he had handled so roughly, perhaps to make up for his rudeness.

O'Connell, Bowring, Hickson, Southwood Smith—pinchbeck people all, what I called a literary political swell-mob. O'Connell is beginning to look very old. There was a celebrated Florentine, Signora Vespucci, there, very dashing in turban and stage-tragicalities, but she spoke only French, and I declined doing more than look. The earth has bubbles.

He was sadly wearied with London and its ways, and with himself most of all.

June 15, 1840.—My soul longs extremely to live altogether in the country again, and yet there, too, I should not be well. I shall never be other than ill, wearied, sickhearted, heavy-laden, till once we get to the final rest, I think. God is good. I am a poor poltroon to complain. Dinners I avoid as the very devil. 'What's ta use on 'em?' What are lords coming to call on one and fill one's head with whims? They ask you to go among champagne, bright glitter, semi-poisonous excitements which you do not like even for the moment, and you are sick for a week after. As old Tom White said of whisky, 'Keep it—Deevil a ever I'se better than when there's no a drop on't i' my weam.' So say I of dinner popularity, lords and lionism—Keep it; give it to those that like it.

The slightly happier side appears in a letter of the same date to his sister:—

I stay here because I am here, and see not on the whole where I could get forward with my work much better. The heat has never yet afflicted me much. The horse is of considerable use, carries me out into the clear afternoon air. The bright greenness of the world shows me how like Elysium it is. Alas! I know well if I were there daily and always, I should care little for it. Except on compulsion, I go little into the town, call on nobody there. They can come here if they want me; if not I shall like it still better. Our old wooden Battersea bridge takes me over the river; in ten minutes' swift trotting I am fairly away from the monster and its bricks. All lies behind me like an enormous world-filling *pfluister*, infinite potter's furnace, sea of smoke, with steeples, domes, gilt crosses, high black architecture swimming in it, really beautiful to look at from some knoll-top while the sun shines on it. I ply away, away, some half-dozen miles out. The monster is then quite buried, its smoke rising like a great dusky-coloured mountain melting into the infinite clear sky. All is green, musical, bright. One feels that it is God's world this; and not an infinite Cockneydom of *stoor* and din after all.

In the midst of his work he was still pushing forward the London Library. On June 24, a meeting was held at the Freemasons' Tavern. Lord Eliot was in the chair; Lords Montague, Howick, and Lyttelton—Milman, Milnes, Cornewall Lewis, John Forster, Helps, Bulwer, Gladstone, James Spedding, George Venables—all men who were then in the first rank, or afterwards rose into it, were gathered together by Carlyle's efforts.

Thirlwall warmly interested himself. Carlyle represented that, of the innumerable evils of England, 'there was no remediable worse one than its condition as to books,' 'a condition worthier of Dahomey than of England.' He could bear his mournful testimony that he never, in his whole life, had for one month complete access to books —such access as he would have had in Germany, in France, or anywhere else in the civilised earth. Books were written, not for rich men, but for all men. Every human being had by the nature of the case a *right* to hear what other wise human beings had spoken to him. It was one of the rights of man, and a cruel injustice if denied.

The defect grew out of the condition of the English mind. England hitherto had supposed that the Bible had contained everything which it was indispensable for man to know; and Bibles were within the reach of the humblest. But England was growing, growing it knew not into what, but visibly needing further help. The meeting agreed unanimously that a library should be established. Subscription lists were opened and swiftly filled. Competent persons were chosen to collect books; a house was purchased. The thing was done, and done most admirably, yet Carlyle himself remained miserable as ever. 'Alas!' he wrote on July 3, 'I get so dyspeptical, melancholic, half mad in the London summer: all courage to do anything but hold my peace fades away; I dwindle into the pusillanimity of the ninth part of a tailor, feel as if I had nothing I could do but "die in my hole like a poisoned rat."' It was true, indeed, that he had a special reason for lamentation at that particular moment. He had been summoned

to serve as a special juryman at Westminster. He appealed to Buller to deliver him. Buller told him there *was* a way of escape if he liked to use it—'he could be registered as a Dissenting preacher.' He had to go, and the worst of it was he had to go for nothing, and the futility was a text for fresh indignation.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: July 1, 1840.

These three days I have been kept in quite special annoyance by two summonses to go up to Westminster and serve as a special juryman, in two different courts—both at once, too. Is not that a peculiar beauty? The whole aspect of the thing, the maddest-looking stew of lies, and dust, and foul breath, fills me with despair. I attended two days, neither of my cases coming on. I inquired of all persons what I had to do or look for—in vain. There was no gleam of daylight in it for me, not so much as a seat to sit down upon. At length I followed the hest of nature, and came quietly away, out of the place which I could understand nothing of, except that I was very sick and miserable in it, determined to let nature and accident work out an issue in it which I *could* understand. They have a power, it seems, of fining me to the extent of 100*l.*, but are not like to do it. The world I live in is too mad, and I am not patient enough of its madness. My soul is sick of it, impatient of it, contemptuous of it, desiring or expecting nothing more in general than to be well out of it, with my work well done. This latter is an important point; thank God! it grows to seem to me even more important.

If destiny in the shape of officials afflicted with one hand, it sometimes brought anodynes in the other. One

evening when he came home from his walk, he found Tennyson sitting with Mrs. Carlyle in the garden, smoking comfortably. He admired and almost loved Tennyson. He says:—

A fine, large-featured, dim-eyed, bronze-coloured, shaggy-headed man is Alfred; dusty, smoky, free and easy, who swims outwardly and inwardly with great composure in an inarticulate element of tranquil chaos and tobacco smoke. Great now and then when he does emerge—a most restful, brotherly, solid-hearted man.

Such a visit was the best of medicine.

July 15.—My health (he writes) continues very uncertain, my spirits fluctuating between restless flutter of a make-believe satisfaction, and the stillness of avowed misery, which latter I have grown by long practice to think almost the more supportable state. The meaning, I suppose, is that my nervous system is altogether weak, excitable—the nervous system and whatsoever depends on that.

Innocent affectionate letters came from Scotsbrig.

To Thomas Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: July 19, 1840.

My dear Son,—I received your letter and was very glad to see it, and hear that you were in your usual way—we are going on in our old way. We got little good of the sea; the weather was so cold. I saw Mary, however, and Jean was at Mary's also when I was there—all well, James and the children.

Oh, have we not great reason of thankfulness to the Giver of all good? It was our sacrament last Sabbath, and

many good things we heard, could we put them in practice; but of ourselves we can do nothing. May the Good Shepherd watch over us, and enable us to perform our vows made to Him! He will keep them in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Him. For ever blessed is His name, and let all the people say Amen and Amen!

I hear you are very busy with your lectures. I wish you speedily and well through with them, and healthy in soul and body. I still hope to see you, if we are spared, this summer.

The weather here is at present very stormy and wet; but it is no wonder if we have unfruitful seasons, for we are a people laden with iniquity, like Israel of old. When God's judgments are abroad, we, the inhabitants of earth, should learn righteousness. May God enable us so to do, and to His name be all the praise!

Now, Tom, I am much gratified with your attention in writing so to me. Believe me I would also, if I could write. Give my kindest love to your dearest.

Your own mother,

M. A. C.

He could not be wholly suffocated with the London miasma, when so fragrant a breath of pure air could blow in upon him. The summer number of the 'Edinburgh Review' was announced. He had heard that he was to be 'annihilated,' and that Macaulay was to be the executioner—the real writer was Herman Merivale —and it was under this false impression that he remarked on the article when he read it.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: July 24, 1840.

Macaulay's article is not so bad; on the whole, rather

interesting to me, and flattering rather than otherwise. 'See,' I said to Jane, 'we have produced an effect even on Whiggery, awakened an appetite under the ribs of death.' 'Awakened an indigestion,' she answered. That really it is. One thing struck me much in this Macaulay, his theory of Liberal government. He considers Reform to mean a judicious combining of those that have any money to keep down those that have none. 'Hunger' among the great mass is *irremediable*, he says. *That the pigs be taught to die without squealing*: there is the sole improvement possible according to him. Did Whiggery ever express itself in a more damnable manner? He and I get our controversy rendered altogether precise in this way.

His theory of Dumouriez's campaign is also altogether amazing from a man of any judgment—Whiggish to the backbone. And, lastly, Robespierre's Être Suprême being a religion of the same sort as that of Cromwell—oh Babington, what a cant! Didst thou ever see a cant in this world? No—a man in a jaundice never sees the colour yellow. At bottom, this Macaulay is but a poor creature with his dictionary literature and erudition, his saloon arrogance. He has no vision in him. He will neither see nor do any great thing, but be a poor Holland House unbeliever, with spectacles instead of eyes, to the end of him.

He was undeceived about the authorship of this article. 'I was heartily glad to hear this,' he said; 'of Macaulay I have still considerable hopes.' The 'Quarterly' had also an article, the writer being William Sewell, a High Church leader on his own account, and then a rising star in the Oxford world. Merivale had been ponderous and politico-economic; Sewell was astonishing, as indeed the whole Oxford movement was, to Carlyle.

Did you (he wrote to Sterling), in the course of your historical inquiries, ever fall in with any phenomenon adequately comparable to Puseyism? The Church of England stood long upon her tithes and her decencies; but now she takes to shouting in the market-place, 'My tithes are nothing, my decencies are nothing; I am either miraculous celestial or else nothing.' It is to me the fatallest symptom of speedy change she ever exhibited. What an alternative! Men will soon see whether you are miraculous celestial or not. *Were a pair of breeches ever known to beget a son?*

Reputation in America brought visitors to Cheyne Row from that country—a young, unnamed Boston lady, among others, whom he called a 'diseased rosebud.' Happily America yielded something else than 'sweet sensibility.' It yielded handsome sums of money; and, before the summer was over, he had received from that quarter as much as 400*l*. There was an honourable sense across the Atlantic that, although novelists &c. might be fair prey, Carlyle ought to be treated honestly. About money there was no more anxiety.

August 1, 1840.—I am not likely (he could say) to be in want of cash, for any time visible yet. Much cash, I feel often, would do me no good. I begin to grow more and more quiescent. The rule of heeding no hearsay of others, but minding more and more exclusively what *I* do like or dislike, what is really important for *me* or not for me, shows many things in a new light. I find in the British Empire astonishingly little that it would do me essential benefit to have. I sit in a sort of mournful inexpugnable acquiescence, and look at the green and paved world, really not very covetous of anything connected with the one or the other.

It was now August. The Lectures on Heroes were by this time nearly written out. He had taken no holiday; but, as the end was now in sight, he allowed himself a week's riding tour in Sussex on 'Citoyenne.' Hurstmonceaux and Julius Hare's parsonage was the furthest point which he reached, returning without misadventure by Tunbridge and Sevenoaks. He rode better than his loose seat seemed to promise. Mrs. Carlyle described to us, some years after, in her husband's presence, his setting out on this expedition; she drew him in her finest style of mockery—his cloak, his knapsack, his broad-brimmed hat, his preparation of pipes, &c.—comparing him to Dr. Syntax. He laughed as loud as any of us: it was impossible not to laugh; but it struck me, even then, that the wit, however brilliant, was rather untender. On August 23, late in the afternoon, he had substantially finished his work, and he went out, as he always did on these occasions, to compose himself by a walk.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: August 23, 1840.

The tea was up before I could stir from the spot. It was towards sunset when I first got into the air, with the feeling of a *finished* man—finished in more than one sense. Avoiding crowds and highways, I went along Battersea Bridge, and thence by a wondrous path across cow fields, mud ditches, river embankments, over a waste expanse of what attempted to pass for country, wondrous enough in the darkening dusk, especially as I had never been there before, and the very road was uncertain. I had left my watch and my purse. I had a good stick in my hand. Boat people sate drinking

about the Red House; steamers snorting about the river, each with a lantern at its nose. Old women sate in strange old cottages trimming their evening fire. Bewildered-looking mysterious coke furnaces (with a very bad smell) glowed at one place, I know not why. Windmills stood silent. Blackguards, improper females, and miscellanii sauntered, harmless all. Chelsea lights burnt many-hued, bright over the water in the distance—under the great sky of silver, under the great still twilight. So I wandered full of thoughts, or of things I could not think.

Ruskin himself, when working most deliberately, never drew a more exquisite picture in words than this unstudied reflection of a passing experience. In such mood the lectures were completed, and, as usual, Carlyle was entirely dissatisfied with them.

Nothing (he said) which I have ever written pleases me so ill. They have nothing *new*, nothing that to me is not *old*. The style of them requires to be low-pitched, as like talk as possible. The whole business seems to me wearisome triviality, yet toilsome to produce, which I would like to throw into the fire; some ten days more will get me to the end of it. Ah me! I sometimes feel as if I had lost the art of writing altogether; as if I were a dumb man, whose thought could not so much as utter itself on paper now, not to speak of utterance by action. I do lead a most self-secluded, entirely lonesome existence. 'How is Each so lonely in the wide grave of the All?' says Richter. Jane comes here to take me out to walk. Adieu.

The hope had clung to him of being still able to go to Scotland in the early autumn. John Carlyle was there at this time—an additional attraction. His plan had

been 'to take shipping, to find again there was an everlasting fresh sea water, rivers, mountains, simple peaceful men; that God's universe was not an accursed, dusty, deafening distraction of a cockneydom.' But the weather broke up early this season, and he found that he must stay where he was.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: September 11, 1840.

On Monday last I was on the point of setting out, detained only by some washings of apparel and the like for a day or two. At that time my favourite speculation was through Liverpool towards Ardrossan, from which point I might accomplish a variety of travel—see my good mother beyond and before all. But the weather grew rainy, cold; I myself was bilious, heartless, and forlorn. I summed up all the smashing and exasperation a poor sleepless creature might count on in short days, long frosty nights. After sad silent meditation and computation, I have come to the result that actually *here* is the place wherein prudence bids me continue. The heat is quite out of the weather. I have books here: solitude here. My one sole palliative or remedy is sitting still; which, why should I not do *here* first of all? It gives me a right sore heart, but so I decide. I can't get out. I have taken to the reading of things needful, to solitary walks,[1] avoiding the pestiferous wen where my life is gaoled for these years. I take mostly to the lanes and fields, such as they are, 'grieving by the shore of the mother of dead dogs.' So stands it with me. I lament, above all, about my dear mother; but that also I must bear. When I go to her, she is old and weak; I am sick, sleepless, driven half mad. It

[1] Citoyenne had been given up after the Sussex ride as too great an expense.

is better that I stay here and have beautiful sorrow rather than ugly. I had a letter from her own good hand this morning. I could have *wept* over it; but there was no good in that.

In return for all these disappointments, I calculate all the more intensely that, if God spare me alive, I will spend the whole of next summer in the country, I—though I should even go to live at Puttock again for that purpose. I will stay in the peaceable country till I really want to come back to this, at present, abhorred tumult. I calculate that I shall be writing another book then, that it will be much easier to write anywhere than here. I am bound to save all the money I can, to effect this object. You would laugh, not perhaps with much *mirth*, if you knew all the schemes I turn over in my head for attaining this unattainable blessing. All country in this neighbourhood is nigh unbearable to me, defaced with green paint, cockneyism, dust and din, an abominable aping of country. I want to be far off, solitary, by the shore of the sea. I must have a cheap country, too. I should wish to be within a day's journey of my mother. I have thought of the Northumberland coast; I have thought of the Isle of Man. We shall think yet more about it; but if in silence, all the better.

Meanwhile, thank God! I have again some notions towards writing a book—let us see what comes of that. It is the one use of living, for me. Enough to-day, dear Jack; write to me what you are about, and continue loving me.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

The book that was to be written was 'Cromwell.'

I have got lately, not till very lately (he tells Mr. Erskine),

to fancy that I see in Cromwell one of the greatest tragic souls we have ever had in this kindred of ours. The matter is Past; but it is among the great things of the Past, which, seen or unseen, never fade away out of the Present.

Such an image he desired to draw, and to do it properly he had begun to wish passionately to have done with London, and live somewhere by the sea.

My heart (he said) sometimes struggles with a kind of convulsive eagerness towards that great presence. All *articulate* speech seems but a mockery of what one means. The everlasting Ocean voice, prophesying of Eternity, coming hither from Eternity, one thinks even better for one.

He would have gone, and London would have known him no more, except for Mrs. Carlyle, who knew that he would be restless anywhere. He himself partly felt that she might be right. 'Sick children,' he admitted, 'who long now for this, now for that, are not well off anywhere. The thing they so want, I suppose, is to get to sleep well on their mother's bosom.'

Money, at any rate, was to be saved for the next summer's migration; yet the anxiety to save it did not prevent Carlyle from calculating how much the abandoned visit to Scotland would have cost, and sending part of it to his mother to buy winter clothing.

It would all have been spent (he said) before I could have got up to you by the cheapest way; and now I fancy you all winter, *well wrapt up* on the produce of that. I know you do not need it—thank Heaven you do not!—but from me it will have a particular gusto, nevertheless. Get yourself over

and above, dear mother, something you wished to get—a little keg of beer; a little this, a little that. Stir yourself about more at ease than you would have done. It will be my greatest luxury.

Thus, when the winter set in, Carlyle was still at home, deep in Commonwealth tracts and history. It was stiff work; he did not find he could make great progress in this new enterprise. 'His interest in it even threatened sometimes to decline and die.' He found it 'not a tenth part such a subject as the "French Revolution," nor could the art of man ever make such a book out of it.'

We must hold on (he said). One dreadful circumstance is that the books, without exception, the documents, &c., one has to read, are of a dulness to threaten locked jaw. I never read such jumbling, drowsy, endless stupidities. Seventhly and lastly! Yet I say to myself, a great man does lie buried under this waste continent of cinders, and a great action. Canst thou not unbury them, present them visible, and so help, as it were, in the creation of them?

Again:—

November 16, 1840.—My reading goes on: my stupidity seems to increase with it more and more. I get to see that no history in the strict sense can be made of that unspeakable puddle of a time, all covered up with things entirely obsolete to us—a Golgotha of dead dogs. But some kind of a book can be made. That we are still looking to.

And again:—

November 26.—My reading progresses with or without

fixed hope. I struggled through the 'Eikon Basilike' yesterday; one of the paltriest pieces of vapid, shovel-hatted, clear-starched, immaculate falsity and cant I have ever read. It is to me an amazement how any mortal could ever have taken that for a genuine book of King Charles's. Nothing but a surpliced Pharisee, sitting at his ease afar off, could have got up such a set of meditations. It got Parson Gauden a bishopric. It remains as an offence to all genuine men—a small minority still—for some time yet. The writing of that book, if I ever write it, will be considerably the hardest feat I have attempted hitherto. Last night, greatly against wont, I went out to dine with Rogers, Milman, Babbage, Pickwick, Lyell the geologist, &c., with sundry indifferent-favoured women. A dull evening, not worth awakening for at four in the morning, with the dance of all the devils round you. Babbage continues eminently unpleasant to me, with his frog mouth and viper eyes, with his hide-bound, wooden irony, and the acridest egotism looking through it. Rogers is still brisk, courteous, kindly-affectioned—a good old man, pathetic to look upon. On Sunday I walked three hours out Harrow-ward through the fields. A great deal of solitude I find indispensable for my health of mind. The generality of men have no sincerity in their speech, no sense or profit in it. You are better listening to the inarticulate winds, regulating if possible the dog-kennel of your own heart.

Finally, Carlyle thus winds up the year 1840:—

Journal.

December 26.—World all lying bound in frost, sheeted in snow and rime. Venomous cold. Jane better than usual this winter. Yesterday a long walk with Mill, otherwise entirely

lonely. The stillest Christmas a man could spend. Evening passed in reading Whitelocke. I did not go to Scotland or anywhither in autumn. My lectures, written out since the end of August, lie here still unpublished. Saunders & Ottley offer me 50*l.* for an edition of 750. Munificent! Fraser, consulted by my wife, did not definitely offer any cash at all, I think. For a famous man, my bookseller's economics seem singular enough. Yet what of economics? I happily do not need cash at present. If cash were my object in writing, I had made the lamentablest business of it. For these lectures I wanted any inward monition to publish. Outward there was none but a 50*l.*—rather weakish. And yet some inward monition, difficult to distinguish clearly from a mere prurient love of feeling myself busy, of hearing myself talk (*cavendum*), does begin to manifest itself at times. Perhaps we shall print after all before long. Not of much importance either way. Reviews by Whig, Tory, by 'Deux Mondes'—plenty of reviewing. What is far better, I begin to get alive again! So much vitality recovered that I feel once more how miserable it is to be idle. After all I have seen and undergone here, flatteries, prospects, &c., I feel that the one felicity of my existence is that of *working at my trade*, working with or without reward. All life otherwise were a failure to me, a horrid incoherence in which there was no meaning or result. To work then! I often long to be in the country again; at Puttock again, that I might work and nothing else but work. Had not my wife opposed, I should probably have returned thither before now. Unlucky or lucky? One never knows. In sick seasons this practical question, hitherto insoluble for doubt, returns always on me in a most agitating, uncomfortable manner. Know thy own mind! I am sure to be sick everywhere. I am a little sicker here, and do thoroughly dislike the mud, smoke, dirt, and tumult of this place. Wherein, however, is decidedly a

kind of possible, an actual association with my fellow-creatures, *never* granted elsewhere. Solitude would increase, perhaps twofold or more, my power of working. Shall I go, *carrying* and dragging all along with *me* into solitude? Alas! it is a dreary, desolate matter, go or stay. My one hope and thought for most part is that very shortly it will all be over, my very sore existence ended in the bosom of the Giver of it—at rest somehow. Things might be written here which it is considerably better not to write. As I live, and have long lived, death and Hades differ little to me from the earth and life. The human figure I meet is wild, wondrous, ghastly to me, almost as if it were a spectre and I a spectre—*Taisons.*

Oliver Cromwell will not prosper with me at all. I began reading about that subject some four months ago. I learn almost nothing by reading, yet cannot as yet heartily begin to write. Nothing on paper yet. I know not where to begin. I have not yet got through the veil, got into genuine sympathy with the thing. It is ungainly in the highest degree; yet I am loth to quit it. In our whole English history there is surely nothing as great. If one can delineate anything of England, then this thing. Heaven guide me! Verily one has need of Heaven's guidance.

CHAPTER VIII.

A.D. 1840-1. ÆT. 45-46.

Preparation for 'Cromwell'—Nervous irritability—A jury trial—Visit to Fryston—Summer on the Solway—Return to London and work—Difficulties in the way—Offer of a professorship—Declined.

MRS. CARLYLE, writing at the end of 1840, says of the state of things in Cheyne Row: 'Carlyle is reading voraciously preparatory to writing a new book. For the rest he growls away much in the old style. But one gets to feel a certain indifference to his growling; if one did not, it would be the worse for one.'

He well knew his infirmities, and wished and meant to mend them. 'Think not hardly of me, dear Jeannie,' he himself wrote to her a few months later.

In the mutual misery we often are in, we do not know how dear we are to one another. By the help of Heaven, I shall get a little better, and somewhat of it shall abate. Last night, at dinner, Richard Milnes made them all laugh with a saying of yours. 'When the wife has influenza, it is *a slight cold*—when the man has it, it is, &c. &c.'

No one can be surprised that she objected to being taken back to the 'desert.' She, though she enjoyed London, would have cheerfully gone with him, would herself have urged his going, back to the moors, if he could have found real peace there. But she knew, and

he knew too, that he could not fly from his shadow; that the cause of his restlessness was not in London, but in himself.

How often (he wrote to Sterling) do I, poor wretch, from amid this inane whirlpool which seems to be grinding my life to pieces, cry aloud for a hut in the wilderness, with fields round me and sky over me, that on any terms, consistent with life at all, I might be allowed to live there! Nay, perhaps, *I shall verily fly to Craigenputtock again before long.* Yet I know what solitude is, and imprisonment among black cattle and peat bogs. The truth is, we are never right as we are. 'Oh, the devil burn it!' said the Irish drummer flogging his countryman; 'there's no pleasing of you, strike where one will.'

He was fond of this story of the Irish corporal or drummer, feeling perhaps how well it fitted him. One asks with wonder why he found existence (such as it had become to him) so intolerable; why he seemed to suffer so much more under the small ills of life than when he had to face real troubles in his first years in London. He was now successful far beyond his hopes. The fashionable world admired and flattered him. The cleverest men had recognised his genius, and accepted him as their equal or superior. He was listened to with respect by all; and, far more valuable to him, he was believed in by a fast-increasing circle as a dear and honoured teacher. His money anxieties were over. If his liver occasionally troubled him, livers trouble most of us as we advance in life, and his actual constitution was a great deal stronger than that of ordinary men. As to outward

annoyances, the world is so made that there will be such things, but they do not destroy the peace of our lives. Foolish people intrude upon us. Official people force us to do many things which we do not want to do, from sitting on juries to payment of rates and taxes. We express our opinion on such nuisances perhaps with imprecatory emphasis, but we bear them and forget them. Why could not Carlyle, with fame and honour and troops of friends, and the gates of a great career flung open before him, and a great intellect and a conscience unharassed by a single act which he need regret, bear and forget too? Why, indeed! The only answer is that Carlyle was Carlyle; and a man to whom the figures he met in the streets looked suddenly like spectres, who felt like a spectre himself, and in the green flowery earth, with the sky bending over it, could see 'Tartarus and the gloomy realms of Dis,' was not to be expected to think and act like any other human being.

It was true that, if occasion required, he could think and act like a very shrewd and practical human being. He has already alluded wrathfully to the being summoned to serve on juries. He was called upon again at the beginning of this year, and as the experience was a curious one, and as he often spoke of it, I give the letter in which he tells the story.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: February 18, 1841.

I had been summoned again under unheard-of penalties to attend a jury trial about Patent India-rubber Cotton-

cards. Two people from Manchester had a controversy whose was the invention of the said cards. It had cost them perhaps 10,000*l.*, this controversy or law suit. There were 150 witnesses summoned from all parts of England and Scotland. It had been left unfinished last term. That was the reason of the unheard-of penalties for us jurymen, that they might not be obliged to begin at the beginning again. The same twelve men did all assemble. We sat for two endless days till dark night each day. About eight o'clock at night on the second day we imagined it was done, and we had only to speak our verdict. But, lo and behold! one of the jury stood out. We were eleven for the plaintiff, and one the other way who would not yield. The judge told us we must withdraw, through passages and stairs up and down into a little stone cell with twelve old chairs in it, one candle, and no meat, drink, or fire. Conceive our humour. Not a particle of dinner, nerves worn out, &c. The refractory man—a thickset, flat-headed *sack*—erected himself in his chair and said, 'I am one of the firmest-minded men in England. I know this room pretty well. I have starved out three juries here already.' Reasoning, demonstration, was of no use at all. They began to suspect he had been bribed. He looked really at one time as if he would keep us till half-past nine in the morning, and then get us dismissed, the whole trial to begin *again*. One really could not help laughing, though one had a notion to kill the hash. 'Do not argue with him,' I said. 'Flatter him. Don't you see he has the obstinacy of a boar and little more sense in that head of his than in a Swedish turnip?' It was a head all cheeks, jaw, and no brow, of shape somewhat like a great ball of putty dropped from a height. I set to work upon him;[1] we all set to

[1] As Carlyle told the story to me, the man had settled himself down in a dark corner of the room, there meaning to stay out the night. . . . Carlyle sat down beside him, congratulated him on being a man of

work, and in about an hour after our 'withdrawal' the *Hash*, I pulling him by the arm, was got stirred from his chair—one of the gladdest moments I had seen for a month—and in a few instants more we were all rejoicing on our road home. In my life I have seen nothing more absurd. I reflected, however, that really perhaps I had contributed to get justice done; that, had I not been there, it was very possible they would have quarrelled with their 'firmest-minded man in England,' and cost somebody another 10,000*l.*

Evidently a great diplomatist was lost in Carlyle. But it would have been happy for the peace of Cheyne Row if British justice could have done without him; as indeed for the future it contrived to do. He was disturbed no more for such purposes.

Fraser came to terms about the same time for the lectures on 'Hero Worship.' They were set in type, and he liked them a great deal better when he read them in proof. 'It is,' he said, 'a *goustrous*[1] determined speaking out of the truth about several things. The people will be no worse for it at present. The astonishment of many of them is likely to be considerable.'

The 'Miscellanies,' 'Sartor,' and the other books were selling well, and fresh editions were wanted.

decision, able to have an opinion of his own in these weak days, and stand by it, a quality both rare and precious . . . but, &c. In fact, did he not see that by standing out he would hurt his own friends? . . . The jury were eleven to one. . . . What chance was there that any future jury would agree to the verdict which he wished? There would only be more expense with no result, &c.

[1] *Goustrous*—strong, boisterous.

Young people in earnest about their souls had begun to write to him, thanking him for delivering them from Egypt, begging to be allowed to come to Cheyne Row and see the face and hear the voice of one who had done such great things for them. Amongst the rest came Miss Geraldine Jewsbury, a Manchester lady, afterwards famous as a novelist, and the closest friend of Carlyle's wife; then fresh to life, eager to use it nobly, and looking passionately for some one to guide her. Carlyle's first impressions were unusually favourable.

Miss Jewsbury, our fair pilgrimess (he writes on March 3, 1841), is coming again to-morrow, and then departs for the North. She is one of the most interesting young women I have seen for years; clear delicate sense and courage looking out of her small, sylph-like figure.

The next impression was less satisfactory, though the young lady was still found interesting.

Que deviendra-t-elle? (he asks). A notable young woman, victim of much that *she* did not make; seeking passionately for some Paradise to be gained by battle; fancying George Sand and the 'literature of desperation' can help her thitherward. In the world there are few sadder, sicklier phenomena for me than George Sand and the response she meets with.

For Madame Sand and all her works, for all sentimental, indecent literature whatsoever, Carlyle's dislike amounted to loathing. He calls it somewhere 'a new Phallus worship, with Sue, Balzac, and Co. for

prophets, and Madame Sand for a virgin.' Emerson, who admired this great French celebrity, complained to me once of Carlyle's want of charity about her. Emerson had been insisting to him on her high qualities, and could get for answer nothing except that she was a great—improper female. Geraldine Jewsbury's inclination that way had not recommended her, nor did her own early novels, 'Zoe,' the 'Half Sisters,' &c., tend to restore her to favour. But she worked through all this. In a long and trying intimacy she won and kept the affectionate confidence of the Cheyne Row household, and on his wife's death Geraldine was the first of her friends to whom he turned for support.

Meanwhile Whitelocke and Rushworth did not grow more digestible. The proofs of 'Hero Worship' were finished. The want of rest in the past summer had upset Carlyle's internal system. Work he could not; and at Easter he was glad to accept an invitation from Milnes to accompany him to his father's house, at Fryston, in Yorkshire. His letters give a graphic and attractive picture of the Fryston circle. A few slight extracts will be sufficient here.

Milnes, whom then and always he heartily liked, took him down by railway on April 5. The present Sir Robert Peel was in the carriage with them, and left them at Tamworth.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Royal Hotel, Derby: April 5, 1841.

The last look thy face wore to-day has haunted me all the

way hither. I will write half a word before going to bed, though in a travellers' room with two bagmen dining and conversing on one side of the apartment, and Milnes diligently reading a tragedy of Landor's at the other side of my table. Two blazing jets of gas flaming away right overhead. . . . We got along without the slightest accident comfortably enough. Our weather was of the brightest. I sate looking out at the green spring fields, the beautiful, honest-looking villages and hamlets. It is many a year since *I had seen a spring day*. This was a kind of sample of spring, rich in all kinds of sad and tender recollections for me. Milnes and I got on beautifully. He read 'Oxford Tracts,' &c., all the way, argued and talked in the smartest manner. . . . I managed to smoke three cigars, two of them in the railway in spite of regulations. . . . We set off at nine in the morning; shall arrive about one or two, I fancy. I will write from Fryston, write thou. There is a railway, and letters fly in less than a day. Oh Jeannie, would thou wert happier! Would I could make thee happy! God be with you, my dearest! Hope—let us still hope, and not fear. Good sleep to you, and this along with breakfast to-morrow.

Yours ever from the heart,

T. CARLYLE.

Fryston: April 7.

My fate at Derby was none of the brightest. Bed at half-past one o'clock, to make sure of quiet, then awoke again by the stroke of five! However, one must put up with the accidents of the road. I was not so miserable as might have been expected, at least not till late last night when I had got worn out. This country is altogether like a beautified kind of Scotland; streams of water, fields alternating of green and red, with hawthorn hedges, honest-looking unclipt trees all in bud. The silent sight of it yesterday did me real benefit.

To finish the bulletin part of the business, I awoke this morning again at six (woe's mè, for it was after one before I lay down); but gradually, in spite of noisy servants, in spite of all things, I fell first into sluggish torpor, then into treacle-sleep, and so lay sound as a stone till half-past ten. My hope and expectation is that I shall improve in health here. If I could get riding out among these silent fields and rough country lanes, I should amend fast.

Richard[1] made me dismount some two miles of our appointed goal, and walk homewards by a smarter way through woods, over knolls, &c. Walking was not my forte; however I persevered and did well enough. Over rough-looking places, some of them, we got at last to the Fryston mansion, a large irregular pile of various ages, rising up among ragged old woods in a rough large park, also all sprinkled with trees, grazed by sheep and horses, a park chiefly beautiful because it did not set up for beauty. Ancient-looking female figures were visible through the windows as we drew nigh. Mrs. Milnes, a tall ancient woman, apparently of weak health, of motherly kind heart, of old-fashioned, stately politeness—a prepossessing woman—welcomed us at the door of the drawing-room 'in the silence of the stately hall.'

. . . . . .

I am lodged in a bed-room with four enormous windows, which look out over woody garden spaces and other silent ruralities; the apartment furnished as for Prince Albert and Queen Victory, the most absurd place I ever lived in (when I look at myself and my equipment) in this world. I am charged to smoke in it too. . . . I have a fire in it all day. I now write in it to thee. The bed seems to be about 8 feet wide. A ladder conducts you to it if you like. Of my paces

[1] Milnes.

the room measures 15 from end to end, 45 feet long, height and width proportioned, with ancient dead-looking portraits of Queens, Kings, Straffords, and Principalities, &c., really the uncomfortablest acme of luxurious comfort that any Diogenes was set into in these late years.

Fryston: Monday, April 12.

Your second letter came as before at breakfast. I gave Richard the paragraph relating to him to read for his own behoof. Your *Dispatch* objurgation and *Chronicle* eulogy[1] were read, parts of the former aloud, with suitable commentary of laughter, to the company at large. Lady ——, who seems to have some sense of laughter as of other things, understood the Goody's procedure. But to the dear ——'s I could perceive it was matter rather of amazement. 'Does Mrs. Carlyle send you this?' 'Ah, yes, the wicked gipsy; she is glad to have anything like it to send.' Your *Chronicle* puff is really worth something. Can you find out who did it? If it be not Fuz (John Forster), which I rather disincline to believe, then I have another admirer who partly understands what I would be at. Your mother's approbation is also very agreeable to me, and my own mother's *greeting* (crying) over Knox and Luther. And now at last I do think we are very sufficiently applauded and approved, and ought, if possible, to go and do something *deserving* a little applause.

A ride to Wakefield with Milnes was an incident of this visit, with Milnes's conversation in the course of it.

He did not plague me with the picturesque, the good Richard. On my declaring that simple knolls and fields with

[1] Two reviews of 'Hero Worship.'

brooks and hedges among them were the best of all for me, and the picturesque a mere bore, he admitted that partly, at bottom, it was so to him also, and probably to all men. I like Richard better and better—a most good-humoured, kind, cheery-hearted fellow, with plenty of *savoir-faire* in him too. He answered me the other day, when I asked him if he liked Spenser's 'Fairy Queen,' 'Is it as a public question that you ask me or as a private confidential one?' Nobody could answer better. At Wakefield we saw a smoky spinning town, and an ancient Socinian lady named ——. We galloped and trotted, I smoking cigars, and looking out on the quiet of Mother Earth, improved by agriculture; Richard talking about Puseyism, aristocratic blackguards, aristocratic originals, Crypto-Catholicism, and much else. We came across the park at full gallop about six o'clock, to dine with the Dragon of Wantley as we found.

'The Dragon of Wantley' was Lord Wharncliffe, who was attending quarter sessions at Pomfret; a Tory peer whom Carlyle found 'an innocent, wooden, limited, very good old Dragon.' The James Marshalls dined also the same evening at Fryston, Mrs. James Marshall being the Miss Spring Rice who was mentioned above as an attendant at the lectures. They lived at Headingly, near Leeds, and pressed Carlyle to pay them a visit when he left Fryston. He said he was 'a waiter on Providence,' and could not say what he could do, but decided eventually to go. The Fryston visit lasted a fortnight. 'Alas!' he says, on closing his account of it, 'we were at church on Sunday. Roebuck (much tamer than before) was here with lawyers. This way leads not to peace, yet I actually slept last night for the first time without rising to smoke.'

Life in great English country houses may be as well spent as life elsewhere by the owners of them who have occupations to attend to. For visitors, when large numbers are brought together, some practice is required if they are to enjoy the elaborate idleness. The habits of such places as Fryston and Headingly, to which he went afterwards, were as yet a new experience to Carlyle. From the latter place he reported on April 17th.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Headingly: April 17, 1841.

Richard and I rolled off from the doors of Fryston Hall in a handsome enough manner yesterday about eleven o'clock. We left a vacant house to a quietude which I should think must have been welcome to it. I never lived before in such an element of 'much ado about *almost* Nothing;' life occupied altogether in getting itself lived; troops of flunkeys bustling and becking at all times, the meat-jack creaking and playing all day, and I think all night, for I used to hear it very early under my room; and such champagning, claretting, and witty conversationing. *Ach Gott!* I would sooner be a ditcher than spend *all* my days so. However, we got rather tolerably through it for these ten days, and I really think I can report a favourable change in my inner man in spite of every drawback. I have not yet made out one good sleep. This morning I had a fair chance, had fallen asleep again, and was afar in sweet oblivion, apparently for hours, when the visage of a flunkey at the foot of my bed roused me. 'What o'clock?' '*Af pas seven, Sir.*' 'When is breakfast?' '*Af pas eight.*' Flunkey of the Devil. I rose as slowly as I possibly could, read newspapers, &c., you may judge with what felicity, till ten,

when breakfast did arrive. No wealth should in any case induce me to be concerned with retinues of flunkeys. And yet, poor fellows! even this flunkey of the Devil is a very assiduous, helpful creature. I will tell him not to call me to-morrow at all, and so forgive him.

Here at Headingly the house is quieter; the people have almost all sense—two altogether important elements. Besides we dine at six. Nay, we have a smoking room. The youngest brother Arthur has cigars and pipes. I could be better nowhere than here. I have shirked the church. I pleaded 'conscience.' I do really begin to have scruples; that is a truth. 'Nothing can exceed the kindness of these people,'[1] and they are really good people.

I was much entertained with the new mill yesterday, with the thousands of men, lasses and boys and girls, all busy there. It is not nothing, but something, we here live amidst. At six o'clock here a general muster of the Spring Rices and Marshalls, Mrs. Henry Taylor among them, awaited us to dinner, and we had a reasonable enough evening, one of the best I have yet had. Beautiful room where I now sit writing, with Leeds lying safe in the hollow of the green knolls; its steeple-chimneys all dead to-day (Sunday), its very house-smoke cleared away by the brisk wind which is rattling in all windows, growling mystically through all the trees. Nothing that art, aided by wealth, good sense, and honest kindness, can do for me is wanting.

Two pleasant days were spent with the Marshalls, and then Carlyle pursued his way. He had nothing definite to do. He was taking holiday with set purpose, and being so far north he went on by Liverpool, and by steamer thence to Dumfriesshire. His mother had been slightly ailing, and he was glad to be with

[1] Phrase of Edward Irving.

her till she recovered. But he was among his own people, no longer under restraint as among strangers, and he grew restless and 'atrabilious.' 'The stillness of this region,' he wrote when at Scotsbrig, 'would be a kind of heaven for me, could I get it enjoyed; but I have no home here. I am growing weary of the perfect idleness. Like the Everlasting Jew, I must *weiter, weiter, weiter.*' Accordingly in May he was in Cheyne Row again, but in no very improved condition. 'I am sick,' he said, 'with a sickness more than of body, a sickness of mind and my own shame. I ought to know what I am going to work at—all lies there. Despicable mortal! know thy own mind. Go then and do it in silence.' He could not do it; he could not work, he could not rest. There was no help for it; he had to do what in the past year he knew he must do, allow himself a season of complete rest and sea air. The weather grew hot, and London intolerable. He went back to Scotsbrig, and took a cottage at Newby close to Annan, on the Solway, for the summer. Mrs. Carlyle came down with a maid who was to act as cook for them. They were to take possession at the end of July. Mrs. Carlyle stayed a day or two on the way with her newly acquired friends, the Paulets, at Seaforth near Liverpool, where a letter reached her from her husband.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Liverpool.

Scotsbrig: July 1841.

Much good may Liverpool do you, or rather have done you, for it will be the last day when you get this. Had I known the Paulet was so superior a character, I ought certainly to have gone and looked at her. . . . I should on the

whole like best of all to see poor Geraldine, an ardent spark of life struggling and striving one knows not whitherward, too well. May the bounteous heavens be good to her, poor Geraldine! I wish she could once get it fairly into her head that neither woman nor man, nor any kind of creature in this universe, was born for the exclusive, or even for the chief, purpose of falling in love, or being fallen in love with. Good heavens! It is *one* of the purposes most living creatures are produced for; but except the zoophytes and coral insects of the Pacific Ocean, I am acquainted with no creature with whom it is the one or grand object. That object altogether missed, thwarted, and seized by the Devil, there remains for man, for woman, and all creatures (except the zoophytes), a very great number of other objects over which we will still show fight against the Devil. Ah me! These are sorry times, these of ours, for a young woman of genius. My friend Herr —— (word illegible), whom I am reading here, greatly prefers the old deep Norse Paganism, with its stalwart energy and self-help, with its stoicism, rugged nobleness, and depth as of very death, to any Christianism now going. Recommend me to Geraldine, at any rate, as one who loves her, and will lament sore if she gain not the victory, if she find not by-and-by some doctrine better than George-Sandism, inclusive of George-Sandism and suppressive of that. Enough now. Not a word in the shape of news can stand here. I live in a *silence* unequalled for many years. I grow daily better, and am really very considerably recovered now. My popularity is suffering somewhat by the absolute refusal to see anybody whatever. I let it suffer.

Adieu, dear little creature! sail prosperously. Be not too sick. Come jumping up when I step upon the deck at Annan Pool. Kiss Geraldine. I command no more.

Yours ever and aye,

T. CARLYLE.

Something was not altogether right with Carlyle when he wrote this letter. The tone of it is uncomfortable. He was a wayward creature. He met his wife as he promised, drove her over to her mother's at Templand, and intended to stay there with her. On the first night of his arrival he rose at three o'clock in the dawning of the July morning, went to the stable, put his horse into the gig himself, and rushed off to Dumfries to finish his night's rest there. In the forenoon he sent back this account of himself:—

Dumfries: July 22, 1841.

I got along hither much better than you perhaps anticipated. I have managed to get some hours of sleep, and am taking the road (to Annan) not at all in desperate circumstances. Would to Heaven I could hear that my poor Jeannie had got to sleep! I have done little but think tragically enough about my poor lassie all day: about her, and *all* the history we have had together. Alas! but let us not take the tragic side of it. All tragedy has a moral and a blessing in it withal. It was the beautifullest sunrise when I left Templand. Herons were fishing in the Nith; few other creatures yet abroad. I could not make the cock hold his tongue on the roost. I am afraid he still kept thee awake. Alas! the poor Dame has too probably lain all day with a headache. Write to me—write to me. Explain all my suddenness to your mother, to our kind friends. Express all my regret to them, all my, &c. Adieu, my hapless, beloved Jeannie! Sleep and be well, and let us meet not tragically.

Adieu,

T. CARLYLE.

He had made so little secret of his dislike of London, and his wish to leave it, that when he was so much

absent this season a report went abroad that he had finally gone, and Sterling had written to him to inquire. He told his friend, in answer, that for the present he had merely taken a cottage for the summer; for the rest 'he had no fixed intentions, only rebellious impulses, blind longings and velleities.' 'I do not think,' he said, 'that I shall leave London for a while; yet I might readily go farther and fare worse. Indeed, in no other corner of the earth have I ever been able to get any kind of reasonable solid existence at all. Everywhere else, I have been a kind of exceptional, anomalous, anonymous product of nature, provoked and provoking in a very foolish, unprofitable way.'

The Newby lodgings were arranged, and he and his wife were settled in them. *Rest* was the object, the most desirable and the least attainable. His correspondence describes his life there.

To John Carlyle.

Newby: July 28, 1841.

This same furnished cottage is a considerable curiosity of a place, of the tiniest dimensions, as if space here on the beach had been not less precious than in the heart of London; but it is papered, dry, &c., &c.; by her contrivances Jane is making it all very habitable. Already this morning at nine I had a bathe. The tide is not ten yards off. Our friends are affecting by their kindness, by their true wish to help us. It is the loneliest place surely I could have found anywhere in the world, this, at present. Sky and sea, with little change either of sound or colour, such is our whole environment. Very strange, very sad, yet very soothing is this multitudinous everlasting moan of the Frith of the Selgovæ, vexed by its

winds, swinging in here and again out like a huge pendulum hung upon the moon—ever—ever—as in the days of Pliny, and far earlier. Eternity is long, is great; and life with all its grievances and other 'trash-trash' is very short and small.

To John Sterling.

Newby: August 4.

Here now for a matter of ten days. Our house is a small dandified fantasticality of a cottage, almost close upon the gravel of the beach. A footpath, on coarse dunes, with gorse, broom, hairy imitation of grass, passes east and west before our windows. Behind us is an oatfield, now in ear, and fishers' huts and cabins. Right in front from this garret-window lies all Cumberland; lies Skiddaw, Helvellyn, and a thousand wondrous peaks known to me from infancy, at the present moment all blue and shining in the August sun, oftenest sunk in grey tempest, always worth a look from me.

The place is very strange, most lonely. For three days after our arrival we had no phenomenon at all but the everlasting roar of the loud winds, and the going and coming of the great Atlantic brine, which makes up and down once every twelve hours since the creation of the world, never forgetting *its* work; a most huge unfortunate-looking thing, doomed to a course of transcendent monotony, the very image as of a grey objectless eternity.

I bathe daily, ride often, drive my wife or my mother, who is with us in these days, to and fro in frail vehicles of the gig species. It is a savage existence for most part, not unlike that of gipsies. For example, our groom is a great thick-sided, laughing-faced, red-haired—*woman*. She comes to me from time to time with news of inextricable imbroglios in the harness, the head-stalls, and hay-rack. If I could not myself perform, the whole equine establishment would come

to a standstill. But none knows me, none ventures to know me. I roam far and wide in the character of ghost (a true *revenant*). Such gipsydom I often liken to the mud bath your sick rhinoceros seeks out for himself, therein to lie soaking for a season, with infinite profit to the beast's health, they say.

. . . . . .

I love Emerson's book,[1] not for its detached opinions, not even for the scheme of the general world he has framed for himself, or any eminence of talent he has expressed that with, but simply because it is his own book; because there is a tone of veracity, an unmistakable air of its being *his* (wheresoever he may have found, discovered, borrowed, or begged it), and a real utterance of a human soul, not a mere echo of such. I consider it, in that sense, highly remarkable, rare, very rare, in these days of ours. *Ach Gott!* It is frightful to live among echoes. The few that read the book, I imagine, will get benefit of it. To America, I sometimes say that Emerson, such as he is, seems to me like a kind of New Era. Really, in any country, all sunk crown deep in cant, twaddle, and hollow traditionality, is not the first man that will begin to speak the truth—any truth—a new and newest era?

There is no likeness of the face of Emerson that I know of. Poor fellow! It lies among his liabilities to be engraved yet, to become a Sect founder, and go partially to the devil in several ways; all which may the kind heavens forbid! What you ask about *my* likeness is unanswerable. I likened it, four months ago, when I struck work in sitting, to a compound of the head of a demon and of a flayed *horse*. *Infandum, infandum!*

Carlyle had sat to several persons. I cannot say to

[1] The first series of Emerson's Essays just published in England, with a preface by Carlyle.

which of several performances this singular description refers. For some reason, no artist ever succeeded with a portrait of him.

To John Carlyle.

Newby: August 15, 1841.

It is all like a kind of vision of Hades, this country to me, especially when it sinks all grey like a formless blot, future and past alike nothing or an unintelligible something. The truth is, I myself in these weeks make no debate whatever against the great exterior *Not I.* There is nothing but passivity, idleness, and Balzac literature in me. Perhaps it is good so. I shall get to working, to asserting myself by-and-by. Never have I been idler since I can remember. If my health do not improve a little, it is very hard. I see nobody, will let nobody see me. 'It is not to be a Lion,' Jane says, 'but to be a Tiger.'

To the Same.

August 20.

Our time, which is about done here, has gone along as well as was needful in a kind of vagabond style, the fruits of which I expect afterwards. I have lived, as it were, entirely alone, in company with the Titanic elements, spirits of the water, earth, wind, and mud—by no means the worst company. Last night after dusk I walked as far as Gallowbank Pool, in a grey wild wind, in perfect solitude except for sleeping cows, except three fishers too, whose rude Annan voices I heard busy in their *trows* in the Gallowbank Pool when I arrived. No walk in the world could be more impressive to me. I looked into the Lady Well in passing home again. Annan street had groups of 'prentice lads on it, and maid-servants in white aprons. Tom Willison's shop-light was

shining far up the street, but Tom himself, I suppose, is laid long since in the everlasting night, or the everlasting day. Near ten o'clock I was here again.

Readers of 'Redgauntlet' will know the scenery of that evening walk. Whether as a rhinoceros in his mud bath, or as an unquiet *revenant*, in either case he was determined to have nothing to say to his fellow-creatures. There he was, in the very centre of his oldest acquaintances. Not a place or a name or a person but was familiar to him from his boyhood. At Annan he had been at school. At the same school he had been an usher. Annan was Irving's home, and Irving's relations were all round him. Yet he visited no one, he recognised no one, he allowed no one to speak to him, and he wandered in the dusk like a restless spirit amidst the scenes of his early dreams and his early sufferings. The month at Newby over, he stayed another week at Scotsbrig with his mother, went for a few days to the Speddings in Cumberland, thence with his wife, before going back to London, to see Miss Martineau at Tynemouth. At last, in the end of September, he was at home again, the long holiday over, to which he had looked forward so eagerly, and he threw down into his note-book the impression which it had left.

Journal.

October 3, 1841.—Returned nearly three weeks ago after a long sojourn in Annandale, &c., a life of transcendent *Do*-Nothingism, not *Feel*-Nothingism, an entirely eclipsed, almost as if enchanted, life. Jane was with me. Helen, the servant,

too, had been with us at Newby. The adventure was full of confused pain, partly degrading, disgraceful; cost me in all, seemingly, some 70*l.* We shall not all go back to Annandale for rustication in a hurry. My poor old mother! What unutterable thoughts are there for me! How the light of her little upper room used to shine for me in dark nights when I was coming home! The thought of her! Ah me! There is yet *no* thought of all I feel in regard to that. . . . Harriet Martineau lies this long while confined to a sofa, writing, writing, full of spirits, vivacity, *didacticism;* could still give illustration and direction to the whole world, tell every mortal that would listen to her what would make his life all right. —A praiseworthy, notable character. Nevertheless, I was pained by much that I saw. The proper Unitarian species of this our England at present is very curious.

I lazily, and alas! also sullenly, at times refused to see simply any person in Annandale except my near kindred. I do fear I gave offence to right and left, but really could not well help it. Much French rubbish of novels read, a German book on Norse and Celtic Paganism, little other than trash either. Nothing read, Nothing thought, Nothing done. Shame!

Ought I to write now of Oliver Cromwell? *Gott weiss;* I cannot yet see clearly. I have been scrawling somewhat during the past week, but entirely without effect. Go on, go on. Do I not see *so much* clearly? Why complain of wanting light? It is courage, energy, perseverance, that I want. How many things of mine have already passed into public action? I can see them with small exultation; really almost with a kind of sorrow. So *little* light! How enormous is the darkness that renders *it* noticeable! Last week a manufacturer at Leeds compared our Corn-law nobles to the French in 1789; curious to *me.* It is a strange incoherency this position of mine, of the like of me—among the

meanest of men and yet withal among the high and highest. But what is life, except the knitting up of incoherences into coherence? Courage! What a need of some speaker to the practical world at present! They would hear *me* if, alas! I had anything to say. Again and again of late I ask myself in whispers, Is it still the duty of a citizen to be silent, to paint mere Heroisms, Cromwells, &c.? There is a mass as of chaotic rubbish continents lying on me, crushing me into silence. Forward! Struggle! 'Live to make others happy!' Yes, surely at all times, so far as you can. But at bottom that is not the aim of any life. At bottom it is mere hypocrisy to call it such, as is continually done now-a-days. Every life strives towards a goal, and ever should and must so strive. What you have to do with others is not to tread on their toes as you run—this ever and always—and to help such of them out of the gutter—this of course, too—as your means will suffice you. But avoid Cant. Do not think that *your* life means a mere searching in gutters for fallen figures to wipe and set up. Ten thousand and odd to one it does not mean and should not mean that. In our life there is really no meaning at all that one can lay hold of, no results at all to sum up, except the *work* we have done. Is there any other? I see it not at present.

Ye voices of the past! Oh, ye cut my heart asunder with your mournful music out of discord; your prophetic prose grown poetry. *Ay de mi!* But what can I do with you? This day I actually ought to try if I could get to work. Let us try.

October 4.—Alas! I did try, and without results. *Da hab' ich keinen Tag.* My thoughts lie around me all inarticulate, sour, fermenting, bottomless, like a hideous, enormous bog of Allan—a thing ugly, painful, of use to no one. We must force and tear and dig some kind of *main ditch* through it. All would be well then: growth, fertility, greenness, and

running water—a business that will not do itself, that must be done. Oh, what a lazy lump I am!

This extract explains the difficulty Carlyle had in beginning 'Cromwell.' He felt that he had something to say, something which he ought to say about the present time to the present age; something of infinite importance to it. England as he saw it was saturated with cant, dosed to surfeit with doctrines half true only or not true at all, doctrines religious, doctrines moral, doctrines political, till the once noble and at heart still noble English character was losing its truth, its simplicity, its energy, its integrity. Between England as it was and England as it might yet rouse itself to be, and as it once had been, there was to Carlyle visible an infinite difference. Jeffrey had told him that, though things were not as they should be, they were better than they had ever been before. This, in Carlyle's opinion, was one of those commonly received falsehoods which were working like poison in the blood. England could never have grown to be what it was if there had been no more sincerity in Englishmen, no more hold on fact and truth, than he perceived in his own contemporaries. The 'progress' so loudly talked of was progress downwards, and rapid and easy because it was downwards. There was not a statesman who could do honestly what he thought to be right and keep his office; not a member of Parliament who could vote by his conscience and keep his seat; not a clergyman who could hope for promotion if he spoke what he really believed; hardly anyone of any kind in any occupation who could

earn a living if he only tried to do his work as well as it could be done; and the result of it all was that the very souls of men were being poisoned with universal mendacity. 'Chartism' had been a partial relief, but the very attention which it had met with was an invitation to say more, and he had an inward impulse which was forcing him on to say it. How? was the question. 'The Westminster Review' had collapsed. He thought for a time that he might have some Review of his own where he could teach what he called 'believing Radicalism,' in opposition to Political Economy and Parliamentary Radicalism. Of this he could make nothing. He could not find men enough with sufficient stuff in them to work with him. Thus all this autumn he was hanging restless, unable to settle his mind on 'Cromwell;' unable to decide in what other direction to turn; and there is nothing of his left written during these months of much interest save one letter about Goethe. Sterling, who had been a persistent heretic on that subject, refusing to recognise Goethe's sovereign excellence, had been studying 'Meister' at Carlyle's instance, was still dissatisfied, and had frankly said so. Carlyle answers.

To John Sterling.

Chelsea: October 31, 1841.

I agree in nearly every word you say about 'Meister,' and call your delineation just and vivid, both of that book and its author, as they impress one there. Truly, as you say, moreover, one might ask the question whether anybody ever did love this man as friend does friend; especially whether this

man did ever frankly love anybody. I think in one sense it is very likely the answers were *No* to both questions, and yet in another sense how emphatically *Yes*. Few had a right to love this man, except in the very way you mention; Schiller, perhaps, to something like that extent. One does not love the heavens' lightning in the way of *caresses* altogether. This man's love, I take it, lay deep hidden in him as fire in the earth's centre. At the surface, since he could not be a Napoleon, and did not like to be a broken, self-consumed Burns, what could it do for him? The earliest instincts of self-culture, I suppose, and all the wider insights he got in the course of that, would alike prescribe for him, 'Hide all this; renounce all this; all this leads to madness, indignity, Rousseauism, and will for ever remain bemocked, ignominiously crucified one way or another in this lower earth. Let thy love far hidden spring up as a soul of beauty and be itself victoriously beautiful.' Let summer heat make a whole world verdant, and if Sterling ask next century, 'But where is your thunderbolt then?' Sterling will take another view of it.

An interesting incident, though it led to nothing, lightened the close of this year. In the old days at Comely Bank and Craigenputtock, Carlyle had desired nothing so much as a professorship at one or other of the Scotch universities. The door had been shut in his face, sometimes contemptuously. He was now famous, and the young Edinburgh students, having looked into his lectures on Heroes, began to think that, whatever might be the opinions of the authorities and patrons, they for their part would consider lectures such as those a good exchange for what was provided for them. A 'History chair' was about to be established.

A party of them, represented by a Mr. Duniface, presented a requisition to the Faculty of Advocates to appoint Carlyle. The 'Scotsman' backed them up, and Mr. Duniface wrote to him to ask if he would consent to be nominated. Seven years before, such an offer would have had a warm welcome from him. Now he was gratified to find himself so respected by the students. But then was then, and now was now.

The chair (he said of it) has no endowment at all. To go among Scotch Presbyterians, Scotch pedantries, Klein-Stadteries, without any advantage but a lecture-room, and their countenance and copartnery, would never for a moment do. Cannot I make for myself a university at any time in any quarter of the Saxon world by simply hiring a lecture-room and beginning to speak? Yet the movement of these young lads is beautiful, is pathetic to me: a young generation calling me affectionately home, and I already across the *irremeabilis unda*. 'The wished for comes too late.' *Tant mieulx*, now and then.

This or something like this will I send—I must take care the dogs do not print it in their newspapers:—

To Mr. Duniface and his fellow-requisitionists.

My dear Sir,—Accept my kind thanks, you and all your associates, for your zeal to serve me. This invitation of yours, coming on me unexpectedly from scenes once so familiar, now so remote and strange, like the voice of a new generation now risen up there, is almost an affecting thing. I can in some true sense take it as a voice from the young ingenuous minds of Scotland at large, calling to me in these confused deep struggling times, 'Come thou, and teach us what is good.' If I did not hope still in other ways to do

what is in me towards teaching you and others, I should be doubly sorry that my answer must be negative. Ten years ago such an invitation might perhaps have been decisive of much for me, but it is too late now; too late for many reasons, which I need not trouble you with at present.

I will solicit a continuance of your regards; I will bid you all be scholars and fellow-labourers of mine in things true and manly; that so we may still work in real concert at a distance and scattered asunder, since together it is not possible for us. With sincerest wishes, yours,

T. CARLYLE.

Such a letter, brief, pregnant, and graceful, must have increased the regret among the students that they could not have the writer of it among them. *Could not*—for that was the word. At the universities of England and Scotland, as they were then constituted, a man of genius bent on speaking truth and nothing else could have no place. Is it otherwise now? The emoluments of the chair would have been ample, for the students would have crowded into the class, and the professors' incomes depend almost wholly on the lecture fees. Happily finance was no longer an anxiety to Carlyle.

Money (he notes) does not weigh excessively much with me now that I have wherewithal to go on unbated by the hellhound idea of beggary. I begin to see now that it is not on the money side that we shall be wrecked, but on some other. *Deo gratias!* for it was an ugly discipline that.

CHAPTER IX.

A.D. 1842. ÆT. 47.

Sterling at Falmouth—My own acquaintance with him—'Strafford'—Carlyle's opinion—Death of Mrs. Welsh—Carlyle for two months at Templand—Plans for the future—Thoughts of returning to Craigenputtock—Sale of Mrs. Welsh's property—Letters from Lockhart—Life in Annandale—Visit to Dr. Arnold at Rugby—Naseby field.

STERLING was spending the winter of 1841-2 at Falmouth. His chest was weak. He had tried the West Indies, he had tried Madeira, he had tried the south of France, with no permanent benefit. He was now trying whether the mild air of the south of Cornwall might not answer at least as well, and spare him another banishment abroad. It was here and at this time that I became myself acquainted with Sterling. I did not see him often, but in the occasional interviews which I had with him he said some things which I could never forget, and which affected all my subsequent life. Among the rest, he taught me to know what Carlyle was. I had read the 'French Revolution,' had wondered at it like my contemporaries, but had not known what to make of it. Sterling made me understand that it was written by the greatest of living thinkers, if by the side of Carlyle any other person deserved to be called a thinker at all. He showed me, I remember, some of Carlyle's letters to

him, which have curiously come back into my hands after more than forty years. Looking over these letters now, I find at the beginning of this year some interesting remarks about Emerson, with whom also Sterling had fallen into some kind of correspondence. Besides his own Essays, Emerson had sent over copies of the 'Dial,' the organ then of intellectual Liberal New England. Carlyle had not liked the 'Dial,' which he thought high-flown, often even absurd. Yet it had something about it, too, which struck him as uncommon.

It is to me (he said) the most wearisome of readable reading; shrill, incorporeal, spiritlike; I do not say ghastly, for that is the character of your Puseyism, Shelleyism, &c., real ghosts of extinct Laudisms, Robespierreisms, to me extremely hideous at all times. This New England business I rather liken to an *un*born soul that has yet got no body. Not a pleasant neighbour either.

But the chief substance of these letters is about Sterling's own work. He had just written 'Strafford,' and had sent the manuscript to be read at Cheyne Row. Carlyle, when asked for his opinion, gave it faithfully. He never flattered. He said honestly and completely what he really thought. His verdict on Sterling's tragedy was not and could not be favourable. He could find no true image of Strafford there, or of Strafford's surroundings. He had been himself studying for two years the antecedents of the Civil War. He had first thought Montrose to have been the greatest man on Charles's side. He had found that it was not Montrose, it was Wentworth; but Wentworth, as he conceived

him, was not in Sterling's play. Even the form did not please him, though on this he confessed himself an inadequate judge. His remarks on art are characteristic:—

Of Dramatic Art, though I have eagerly listened to a Goethe speaking of it, and to several hundreds of others mumbling and trying to speak of it, I find that I, practically speaking, know yet almost as good as nothing. Indeed, of Art generally (*Kunst*, so called) I *can* almost know nothing. My first and last secret of *Kunst* is to get a thorough *intelligence* of the *fact* to be painted, represented, or, in whatever way, set forth—the *fact* deep as Hades, high as heaven, and written *so*, as to the visual face of it on our poor earth. This once blazing within me, if it will ever get to blaze, and bursting to be out, one has to take the whole dexterity of adaptation one is master of, and with tremendous struggling, really frightful struggling, contrive to exhibit it, one way or the other.

This is not *Art*, I know well. It is Robinson Crusoe, and not the Master of Woolwich, building a ship. Yet at bottom is there any Woolwich builder for such kinds of craft? What *Kunst* had Homer? What *Kunst* had Shakespeare? Patient, docile, valiant intelligence, conscious and unconscious, gathered from all winds, of these two things—their own faculty of utterance, and the audience they had to utter to, rude theatre, Ithacan Farm Hall, or whatever it was—add only to which as the soul of the whole, the above-said blazing, radiant insight into the fact, blazing, burning interest about it, and we have the whole Art of Shakespeare and Homer.

To speak of Goethe, how the like of him is related to these two, would lead me a long way. But of Goethe, too, and of all speaking men, I will say the soul of all worth in them, without which none else is possible, and with which

much is certain, is still that same radiant, all-irradiating insight, that same burning interest, and the glorious, melodious, perennial veracity that results from these two.

This extract is interesting less for its bearing upon Sterling's play, which brilliant separate passages could not save from failure, than for the full light which it throws on Carlyle's own method of working. But from his own work and from Sterling's and all concerns of his own he was called away at this moment by a blow which fell upon his wife, a blow so severe that it had but one alleviation. It showed her the intensity of the affection with which she was regarded by her husband. Her mother, Mrs. Welsh, had now resided alone for several years at her old home at Templand in Nithsdale, where the Carlyles had been married. Her father, Walter Welsh, and the two aunts had gone one after the other. Except for the occasional visits to Cheyne Row, Mrs. Welsh had lived on there by herself in easy circumstances, for she had the rent of Craigenputtock as well as her own jointure, and, to all natural expectation, with many years of life still before her. The mother and daughter were passionately attached, yet on the daughter's part perhaps the passion lay in an intense sense of duty; for their habits did not suit, and their characters were strongly contrasted. Mrs. Welsh was enthusiastic, sentimental, Byronic. Mrs. Carlyle was fiery and generous, but with a keen sarcastic understanding; Mrs. Welsh was accustomed to rule; Mrs. Carlyle declined to be ruled when her judgment was unconvinced; and thus, as will have been seen, in spite of their mutual affection, they were

seldom much together without a collision. Carlyle's caution—'*Hadere nicht mit deiner Mutter, Liebste. Trage, trage!*'—tells its own story. Mrs. Carlyle, as well as her husband, was not an easy person to live with. She had a terrible habit of speaking out the exact truth, cut as clear as with a graving tool, on occasions, too, when without harm it might have been left unspoken.

Mrs. Welsh had been as well as usual. There had been nothing in her condition to suggest alarm since the summer when the Carlyles had been in Annandale. On February 23 Mrs. Carlyle had written her a letter, little dreaming that it was to be the last which she was ever to write to her, describing in her usual keen style the state of things in Cheyne Row.

To Mrs. Welsh, Templand.

5 Cheyne Row: Feb. 23, 1842.

I am continuing to mend. If I could only get a good sleep, I should be quite recovered; but, alas! we are gone to the devil again in the sleeping department. That dreadful woman next door, instead of putting away the cock which we so pathetically appealed against, has produced another. The servant has ceased to take charge of them. They are stuffed with ever so many hens into a small hencoop every night, and left out of doors the night long. Of course they are not comfortable, and of course they crow and screech not only from daylight, but from midnight, and so near that it goes through one's head every time like a sword. The night before last they woke me every quarter of an hour, but I slept some in the intervals; for they had not succeeded in rousing *him* above. But last night they had him up at three. He went to bed again, and got some sleep after, the 'horrors'

not recommencing their efforts till five ; but I, listening every minute for a new screech that would send him down a second time and prepare such wretchedness for the day, could sleep no more.

What is to be done God knows ! If this goes on, he will soon be in Bedlam ; and I too, for anything I see to the contrary : and how to hinder it from going on ? The last note we sent the cruel woman would not open. I send for the maid, and she will not come. I would give them guineas for quiet, but they prefer tormenting us. In the *law* there is no resource in such cases. They may keep wild beasts in their back yard if they choose to do so. Carlyle swears he will shoot them, and orders me to borrow Mazzini's gun. Shoot them with all my heart if the consequences were merely having to go to a police office and pay the damage. But the woman would only be irritated thereby into getting fifty instead of two. If there is to be any shooting, however, I will do it myself. It will sound better my shooting them on principle than his doing it in a passion.

This despicable nuisance is not at all unlikely to drive us out of the house after all, just when he had reconciled himself to stay in it. How one is vexed with little things in this life ! The great evils one triumphs over bravely, but the little eat away one's heart.

An 'evil' greater than she had yet known since her father was taken away hung over Mrs. Carlyle while she was writing this letter. Five days later there came news from Templand, like a bolt out of the blue sky, that Mrs. Welsh had been struck by apoplexy and was dangerously ill. Mrs. Carlyle, utterly unfit for travelling, 'almost out of herself,' flew to Euston Square and caught the first train to Liverpool. At

Liverpool, at her uncle's house, she learnt that all was over, and that she would never see her mother more. She was carried to bed unconscious. When she recovered her senses she would have risen and gone on; but her uncle would not let her risk her own life, and to have proceeded in her existing condition would as likely as not have been fatal to her. Extreme, intense in everything, she could only think of her own shortcomings, of how her mother was gone now, and could never forgive her. The strongest natures suffer worst from remorse. Only a strong nature, perhaps, can know what remorse means. Mrs. Carlyle had surrendered her fortune to her mother, but the recollection of this could be no comfort; she would have hated herself if such a thought had occurred to her. Carlyle knew what she would be suffering. The fatal news had been sent on to him in London. He who could be driven into frenzy if a cock crew near him at midnight, had no sorrow to spare for himself in the presence of real calamity.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Maryland Street, Liverpool.

Chelsea: March 1, 1842.

My darling! my poor little woman! Alas! what can I say to thee? It was a stern welcome from thy journey this news that met thee at Maryland Street. Oh, my poor little broken-hearted wife! Our good mother, then, is away for ever. She has gone to the unknown Great God, the Maker of her and of us. We shall never see her more with these eyes. Weep, my darling, for it is altogether sad and stern, the consummation of sorrows, the greatest, as I hope, that awaits thee in this world. I join my tears with thine; I cry

from the bottom of my dumb heart that God would be good to thee, and soften our tears into blessed tears. The question now, however, is what is to be done. I almost persuade myself your cousins would get you advised to take a little repose with them—Repose !—and that you are still at Liverpool and will expect this letter there. Tell me : would you wish me to come ? to attend you forward ? to bring you back home ? to do or to attempt anything that even promises to aid you ? Speak, my poor darling ! I am in a whirl of unutterable thoughts. I can advise nothing, but in everything I will be ordered by your wishes. Speak them out.

I wrote to Dr. Russell[1] last night. Alas ! his tidings were all too sudden. The swiftest mail train could not have carried us thither. Even at Craigenputtock it might have befallen so. Perhaps this night there will be some letter come from you. No, no ! I remember now there is none possible till tomorrow morning. Oh, that you had but stayed with me ! It would have been something to weep on my shoulder. God help thee to bear this sore stroke, my poor little Jeannie ! Adieu, I will write no more at present. I have, of course, many letters to write. God be with thee, and solace thy poor heart, my own dearest !

T. CARLYLE.

3 o'clock.

I have kept this open till the last minute in hopes some clearness of purpose might rise on me from amid that black chaos of thoughts. It seems cruel to ask thee for advice, and yet thy wishes, dearest, shall be the chief element of guidance for me. As yet, in the mood I am in, all whirls and tumbles ; but this question does arise. Ought I not, by all laws of custom and natural propriety, to be there, with or

[1] The physician who had attended Mrs. Welsh, and husband of the Mrs. Russell who was afterwards Mrs. Carlyle's correspondent.

without thee, on the last sad, solemn occasion, to testify my reverence for one who will be for ever sad, dear, and venerable to me? Think thou and answer. I will have all in readiness at any rate, so that I may be able to start to-morrow night, or say on Thursday morning, if needful. Shall I? Adieu, my own darling!

Mrs. Carlyle lay ill in Liverpool, unable to stir, and unpermitted to write. He himself felt that he must go, and he went without waiting to hear more. As it was, he was too late for the funeral, which had for some reason been hurried; but his brother James, with the instinct of good feeling, had gone of his own accord from Ecclefechan to represent him. Carlyle was sole executor, and there were business affairs requiring attention which might detain him several weeks. He was a few hours with his wife at Liverpool on his way, and then went on, taking his wife's cousin Helen with him to assist in the many arrangements which would require a woman's hand. Everything was, of course, left to Mrs. Carlyle, and her own property was returned to her. It was not large, from 200*l.* to 300*l.* a year; but, with such habits as hers and her husband's, it was independence, and even wealth.

But this was the last recollection which occurred to Carlyle. He travelled down on the box of the mail in a half-dreamy state, seeing familiar faces at Annan and Dumfries, and along the road, but taking no heed of them. Templand, when he reached it, was a haunted place. There he had been married; there he had often spent his holidays when he could come down from Craigenputtock; there he had conceived 'Sartor;' there

two years before his own mother and he had smoked their pipes together in the shrubbery. It was from Templand that he had rushed away desperate in the twilight of a summer morning and seen the herons fishing in the river pools. A thousand memories hung about the place, which was now standing desolate. During the six weeks while he remained there he wrote daily to his wife, and every one of these letters contained something tenderly beautiful. A few extracts, however, are all that I can allow myself.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Templand: March 7, 1842.

All this house is like a ghost to me, but still clear and pure like a kind of blessed spirit. The old feathers and grass ears stick in the bottle on the mantelpiece. There are two pennies with bits of wax on them. Helen thinks they are memorials of John Grey or Mr. Bradfute.

March 9.

Our cousin's accounts of thee are better and always better, but we hear of sleepless nights, doctors, and sleep procured by medicine. I entreat thee, my poor little woman! compose thy sad heart. Alas, alas! I bid thee cease to be miserable, and thou canst not cease. The stroke that has fallen is indeed irreparable, and tears, hot, sorrowful tears, are due to the departed who will meet us here no more. We shall go to her; she shall not return to us. So it was in the Psalmist David's time; so it is in ours, and will be to the end of the world—a world long ago defined as a vale of tears, in which, if we did not know of very truth that God presided over it, and did incessantly guide it towards good and not towards evil, we were incontrollably wretched.

March 11.

I am dreadfully sad in the mornings before I get up, and some kind of work or endeavour after work fallen to. One has to look at the black enemy steadily and contemplate him in solitude for oneself. All sorrow is an enemy, but it carries a *friend's message* within it too. Oh, my poor Jeannie! all *life* is as death, and the true Igdrasil which reaches up to heaven goes down to the kingdom of Hela; and God, the Everlasting Good and Just, is in it all. We have no words for these things; we are to be silent about them; yet they are true, for ever true. My dear partner, endeavour to still all feelings that can end in no action. Compose thy poor little heart and say, though with tears, 'God's will be done.'

Among other questions requiring answer was, first and foremost, what was to be done with Templand itself? The house and farm were held under the Duke of Buccleuch. The lease had yet several years to run.

Templand: March 19.

I understand it takes some three weeks to give proper notification. In three weeks I might have it settled and be making for London again. I do not dislike a kind of fellowship with the dead for that length of time. It is very mournful, almost awful, but it is wholesome and useful for me. It is towards Eternity that we are all bound. It is in Eternity that we already all live; and awful death itself is but another phasis of life which also is awful, fearful, and wonderful, reaching to heaven and hell. Ah me! one feels in these moments, first of all, how beggarly, almost insulting to one, are all *words* whatsoever, when such a thing lies there arrived and visible.

The first intention had been to part with the place

and sell the furniture; but it was endeared to Carlyle by many recollections, and the thought occurred to him whether it might not be better to keep it as it stood, and with all that it contained, as a summer retreat, or perhaps as a final home for himself. His mother, who had come across to stay with him, perhaps encouraged the feeling. He did not propose it; he was careful to propose nothing which his wife might dislike and have the pain of rejecting. He hinted at it merely as a passing thought, and it was as well that he did no more; for he saw at once that the very idea of such a thing was intolerably distressing to her, and of this project he said no more.

His mother went home after a week. 'She sent you her sympathy and blessing,' Carlyle wrote. '"Thou must tell her too," she added, "whatever ye may think of it, that I hope she will get this great trouble sanctified to her yet," which I said I doubted not my poor Jane in her own way was ever struggling to obtain.'

It is the first day of my entire solitude here (he continued [for Helen was also gone] on March 22), a bright, pale March day, defaced with occasional angry gusts of storm. I feel the whole, however, myself, and her that is away, to be full of mystery, of sorrow and greatness; God-like, the work wholly of a God. Lament not, my poor Jane! As sure as we live we shall yet go to her; we shall before long join her, and be united, we and all our loved ones, even in such a way as God Most High has seen good; which way, of all conceivable ways, is it not verily the best? Speak as we will, there is nothing more to be spoken but even this: God is great; God is good; God's will be done. Flesh and blood do rebel, but the spirit within us all answers: Yes, even so. My poor woman!

In the quiet at Templand, and among such solemn surroundings, London and its noisy vanities, its dinners and its hencoops, did not seem more beautiful to Carlyle. More than ever he prayed to be away from it. At that house it was evident that Mrs. Carlyle could not bear the thought of living. But there was Craigenputtock not far off, towards which he had often been wistfully looking. Of this, too, hitherto she had refused to hear so much as a mention; but it was now her own, and her objection might be less. They could afford to spend something to improve its comforts. An auction sale of the Templand furniture, every part of which had a remembrance attaching to it, was in itself a kind of sacrilege. Again he would merely hint.

Once or twice to-day (he said at the close of the same letter) it strikes me, if you did not so dislike Craigenputtock, might we not carry all over thither, build them together again, and avoid a sale? But this, I am afraid, is rather wild. I myself have no love for Craigenputtock; but the place might still be saved, made even neater than ever, and while it continues ours there is a kind of necessity for our going thither sometimes.

Mrs. Carlyle was leaving Liverpool and returning to London. Her answer to this suggestion did not immediately arrive. Perhaps he knew that she would not like it, and may have himself thought no further about the matter. His daily missives still continued.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Templand: March 23.

The day has been pale, bright, serene, a sort of Sabbath

to me. The Closeburn trees were all loud with rooks. The cattle seemed happy; the unfathomable azure resting beautifully above us all. One asks, Is man alone born to sorrow that has neither healing nor blessedness in it? All nature from all corners of it answers No—for all the wise No. Only *Yea* for the unwise, who have man's susceptibilities, appetites, capabilities, and not the insights and rugged virtues of men. The sun is down—twilight itself coming through this poor north window which you know so well begins to fail me.

March 25.

My dear good Wife,—Your kind and sad little note arrived this morning. Never mind me and my health. The country, with its sacred stillness and freshness, is sure to amend me of everything. Its very tempests and blistering spring showers do me good to witness. God's earth! It is good for me, also, to be left quite alone here, alone with my griefs and my sins, even as in the presence of one sainted and gone into the eternal clearness. God Most High is over us both.

This morning I hear from Adamson [1] about some legacy tax and the inventory of effects. I have taken order about it and answered him. To you this only will be interesting, that she had, if I recollect, 189*l.* lying in the bank, so needed not to fear money straits at least. Heaven be praised for it! Oh Jeannie, what a blessing for us now that we fronted poverty instead of her doing it! Could the Queen's Treasury compensate us had we basely left her to such a struggle?

He had to regret that he had so much as alluded to Craigenputtock. The very name of it had, in Mrs. Carlyle's weak, agitated state, awakened a kind of horror.

[1] I suppose a Dumfries official.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Cheyne Row.

Templand: March 26.

Dear Jeannie,—You are evidently very ill. I entreat you take care of yourself. Do not tear yourself in pieces. As to Craigenputtock, that was a passing thought, and has come no more back. If I make *you* miserable, it shall be for a greater blessedness to myself than a residence there among the savages.

March 27.

Do not fret yourself at all about that note. . . . I saw very well what you now tell me; how it had been. The worst effect of all on me was that it indicates such a sick, excitable condition. I pray you study to avoid *whatever* can lead thitherward, and know well always that I cannot deliberately mean anything that is harmful to you, unjust, or painful to you. Indeliberately I do enough of such things without meaning them. . . . I walked three hours in the grey March mildness down to the Ford or Ferry of Barjarg, and back again by the river-side and shaws. It was a road I more than once went a good part of on horseback that autumn we last tried to stay here. Alas! how all the faults and little infirmities of the departed seem now what they really were, mere *virtues imprisoned*, obstructed in the strange, sensitive, tremulous element they were sent to live in! Of that once more I could not but think to-day. There is something in these remembrances that would drive one to weeping. Templand in the distance looked to me like a kind of pure Hades and shrine of the dead, poor little Auntie's figure lying in death in it,[1] and then in succession

[1] Aunt Jeannie. I have found a letter lying out of its place among Carlyle's papers, written from Craigenputtock to Mrs. Carlyle on the occasion of Aunt Jeannie's death. I had not seen it when I wrote the account of that part of his life, and so give it in a note here, as it is

the second, and now the third. The rooks are cawing all round, the river rushing ever on, a sacred silence of all human sounds resting far and wide. It is very mournful to me, but preferable to anything that could be offered me of the sort they call joy.

Poor Sterling! setting off to-morrow again on his old hapless errand; [1] and yet who knows whether at bottom it is not a kind of good to him? Were it not for this sickness that always opens an issue, I see not but he must either write a tragedy, or, failing that, break his heart, and so act one. Probably he himself is not without some unconscious feeling of that sort, which in the background may lie as

too beautiful to be passed over. There is no date, but it belongs to the year 1832. Mrs. Carlyle was then at Templand, and had sent up word to her husband that her aunt had gone.

Craigenputtock: 1832.

Your sad messenger is just arrived. I had again been cherishing hopes when the day of hope was clean gone. Compose yourself, my beloved wife, and try to feel that the Great Father is *good*, and *can* do nothing wrong, inscrutable and stern as His ways often seem to us. Surely, surely, there is a life beyond death, and that gloomy portal leads to a purer and an abiding mansion? Suffering angel! But she is now free from suffering, and they whom she can no longer watch over are alone to be deplored. . . . It seems uncertain to me whether I can be aught but an encumbrance at Templand. Yet I feel called to hasten towards *you* at this so trying moment. I mean to set out for Dumfries and order mournings, and be with you some time to-night. I am almost lamed for riding, so that it may be rather late before I can arrive.

My mother is here, and bids me with tears in her eyes send you her truest love and prayers that God may sanctify to you this heavy stroke. 'The world,' she says, 'is a lie, but God is a truth, and His goodness abideth for ever.'

May He keep and watch over my beloved one!

I am always her affectionate

T. Carlyle.

[1] Sent abroad, Falmouth not answering.

a kind of consolation to him. Poor fellow! Enough now, and good night to cousin Jeannie and you, from the loneliest man in all the world—or at least as lonely as any. Good night, and a blessing be with you!

April 3.

Yesterday I set out in the rough wind, while the weather was dry, for a long walk. I went by Penpont, up Scaur Water, round the foot of Tynron Doon. I had all along been remembering a poor little joiner's cottage which I saw once when poor Auntie and you and I went up on ponies. This ride, this cottage, which was the centre of it in my memory, I would again recall, by looking at the places—the places which abide while all else vanishes so soon. It was a day of tempestuous wind; but the sun occasionally shone; the country was grim-bright; the hills of an almost spiritual clearness, and broad swift storms of hail came dashing down from them on this hand and that. It was a kind of *preternatural* walk, full of sadness, full of purity.

The Scaur Water, the clearest I ever saw except one, came brawling down, the voice of it like a lamentation among the winds, answering me as the voice of a brother wanderer and lamenter, wanderers like me through a certain portion of eternity and infinite space. Poor brook! yet it was nothing but drops of water. My thought alone gave it an individuality. It was *I* that was the wanderer, far older and stronger and greater than the Scaur, or any river or mountain, or earth, planet, or thing. The poor joiner's cottage I could not recognise; no joiner, at least, was now there.

My stay here has now a fixed term set to it. After Thursday, come a week, there will be no habitation for me here. I went to the Factor, as I proposed, on Friday—a harmless, intelligent enough, rather *wersh*-looking man. 'He had no power,' he told me. 'The Duke's answer' could

not be here *till the end of next week.* There was little doubt but it would be as I wished. I decided straightway on proceeding with the sale and the other assortments, waiting no longer for 'Dukes' and dependents of Dukes. Their part of the business will gradually be settling itself in the interim. The babbling inconclusive palaver of the rustic population here, if you have anything to do with them, is altogether beyond a jest to me. I positively feel it immoral and disgusting.

April 5.

Margaret,[1] set a talking by some questions of mine, has had me at the edge of crying, or altogether crying. On the last fatal Friday morning the poor sick one said to her, 'Margaret, I have had a bonny dream. I dreamt that my son was writing a book with his heart's blood,' meaning, I suppose, that it was to be a right excellent book. Good God! I shall never forget that. It will stick in my memory for ever more. But why do we mourn? As far as I can gather, she died without pain. Margaret says she had never slept so well, and bragged of her health and was in a cheerful joking humour not many minutes before. The great God is merciful; the stroke could not have been delivered more softly. But that 'bonny dream'! Oh Jeannie! that is a thing inexpressibly sorrowful and sweet to me. I have set you crying *again*, I doubt. I did not mean that.

Among these letters to Mrs. Carlyle I intercalate one written on this same 5th of April to Mr. Erskine, who had offered warm and wise sympathy in his friends' sorrow.

[1] Margaret Hiddlestone, who had been Mrs. Welsh's servant, and was afterwards Mrs. Carlyle's pensioner till her death.

To Thomas Erskine, Linlathen.

Templand: April 5.

Dear Mr. Erskine,—I know not whether my poor wife has yet answered the letter you sent to her, but I know that, if not, yet she means with her earliest strength to do so; for she described it as having been a true solace to her, as having 'told her the very things she was thinking'—a most naïve and complete definition of a letter that *deserved* to be written. Thanks to you in her name and my own. The poor heart seems gathering composure gradually, though still very weak; and in weak bodily health too, imprisoned by the rough spring weather. A young cousin is with her at Chelsea: a cheery, sensible, affectionate girl, whom she describes as a great support to her. Mrs. Rich and all her friends, summoned by a great calamity, had shown themselves full of sympathy and help. It is what mortals owe to one another in such a season. The little birds shrink lovingly together when a great gyr-falcon has smitten one of them. Death I account always as a great deliverance, a dark door into Peace, into everlasting Hope. But it is also well named from of old the King of Terrors—a huge demon-falcon rising miraculously we know not whence, to snatch us away from one another's sight we know not whither! Had not a God made this world, and made Death too, it were an insupportable place. 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' Even so. In whom else, or in what else?

My days pass along here, where a multiplicity of small things still detains but does not occupy me, in a most silent, almost sabbath-like manner. I avoid all company whatever—except the few poor greedy-minded very stupid rustics who have some affairs with me, which I struggle always to despatch and cut short. I see nobody; I do not even read much. The old hills and rivers, the old earth with her star

firmaments and burial-vaults, carry on a mysterious unfathomable dialogue with me. It is eight years since I have seen a spring, and in such a mood I never saw one. It seems all new and original to me—beautiful, almost solemn. Whose great laboratory is that? The hills stand snow-powdered, pale, bright. The black hailstorm awakens in them, rushes down like a black swift ocean tide, valley answering valley; and again the sun blinks out, and the poor sower is casting his grain into the furrow, hopeful he that the Zodiacs and far Heavenly Horologes have not faltered; that there will be yet another summer added for us and another harvest. Our whole heart asks with Napoleon: 'Messieurs, who made all that? *Be silent*, foolish Messieurs!'

Mrs. Carlyle's letters from Cheyne Row showed no recovery of spirits. Wise comfort, wise reflection upon life and duty, was the best cordial Carlyle could administer.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Templand: April 9.

No wonder, my dear wife, you feel disheartened and sick about all work and weary of the world generally. Benevolence, I agree with you, is no trade; altogether, or nearly altogether, a futility when followed as a trade. Yet work does still remain to be done, and the highest law does order us all to work. My prayer is, and always has been, that you would rouse up the fine faculties that *are* yours into some course of real work which you felt to be worthy of them and you. Your life would not then be happy, but it would cease to be miserable. It would become noble and clear with a kind of sacredness shining through it. I know well, none better, how difficult it all is, how peculiar and original your

lot looks to you, and in many ways *is*. Nobody can find work *easily* if much work do lie in him; all of us are in horrible difficulties that look invincible, but that are not so. The deepest difficulty which also presses on us all is the sick sentimentalism we suck in with our whole nourishment, and get ingrained into the very blood of us in these miserable ages! I actually do think it the deepest. It is this that makes me so impatient of George Sand, Mazzini, and all that set of prophets; impatient so far as often to be unjust to what of truth and genuine propriety of aim is in them. Alas! how often have I provokingly argued with you about all that! I actually will endeavour not to do so any more. It is not by arguing that I can ever hope to do you any service on that side; but I will never give up the hope to see you adequately *busy* with your whole mind discovering, as all human beings may do, that in the grimmest rocky wildernesses of existence, there are blessed well-springs, there is an everlasting guiding star.

Courage, my poor little Jeannie! Ah me! Had I been other, for you too it might have been all easier. But I was not other: I was even *this*. In such solemn seasons, let us both cry for help to be better for each other, and for all duties in time coming. Articulate prayer is for me not possible, but the equivalent of it remains for ever in the heart and life of man. I say *let us* pray. . . . God look down upon us; guide us, not happily but *well*, through life. Unite us well with our buried ones according to His will. Amen. . . . My mother, with a kind, speechless heart, does speak so far as to ask if I will send you her blessing. She was telling me yesterday all about the last parting with her mother, how she came out to the middle of the road to take leave of them, &c. Old scenes, images sunk forty years in the past which can still bring tears into old eyes. Ah me! Ah me! Well, I will not add another word to-day, for I

have still much to do, and have written more than enough. Adieu, dearest! God be with you!—He that can wipe away all tears from our eyes. All tears!

Ever your affectionate,

T. CARLYLE.

Heirlooms, and some few other relics at Templand, were packed and sent to London. The remainder of the stock was sold by auction on April 12, and Carlyle, unable to witness so hateful a scene, spent the morning at Crawford Churchyard, where Mrs. Welsh was buried. The first part of the next letter was written there, the conclusion when he returned in the evening to the desolate house.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Crawford: April 14.

I have spent two hours at the *place*. . . . All is composed there into decent regularity, and lies overlooked by the old wilderness as in everlasting rest. I have copied the inscription *lineatim*. I thought you would like to see it that way too. I also copied your grandfather's memorial, evidently composed by her. The man has cut the letters deep, correct, and very well; excellently well as far as lettering goes—one or two mistakes of points (one especially affecting the sense to a grammarian) which I could not bear to leave. I went to the nearest farmhouse (close by), borrowed a chisel and hammer, and succeeded in making it all correct. The stone stands level, firm, raised by six pillarets upon another, which is flat, horizontal, and level with the ground. Grandfather and grandmother, and then a great-grandmother, I think, of date 1737, lie farther to the south. One ewe and her little

black-faced lamb were the only things visible about the spot. The Clyde rolled by its everlasting course. The north wind was moaning through some score of trees that stand on the opposite side of the *Gottes-Acker*. What a name!—a right name. The old hills rested mournful, desolate, pure and strong all round. I could see Castlemaine from the spot.

Templand: Evening.

It was on the whole very well you did not come hither. All things would have fallen with such a deadly weight of grief upon you. Vacant! Vacant! The transitory still here; so much that was transitory proved more lasting than what we wished to continue for ever. The mark of her neat, orderly hand, full of humble, thrifty elegance, very touching in itself anywhere and everywhere, is in all corners of this house; and she—has gone a long journey. Patience, my darling! She has gone whither we are swiftly following her. Perhaps essentially she is still near us. Near and far do not belong to that eternal world which is not of space and time. God rules that too; we know nothing more. The sight of these poor flowers which I have gathered for you has led me into thoughts which perhaps I had better have spared. The poor little flowers have all ventured out this bright day, and there is nobody to bid them right welcome now.

The next morning Carlyle took his last leave of Templand, and went to pass a few quiet days with his mother. As a close of this episode I add a few lines sent to him by a friend whom he rarely saw, who is seldom mentioned in connection with his history, yet who then and always was exceptionally dear to him. The lines themselves were often repeated by him to the end of his own life, and will not be easily forgotten by anyone who

reads them. He says in his notes to the 'Letters and Memorials of Mrs. Carlyle,' that while at Templand he received three or four friendly serious notes from Lockhart. In one of these, dated April 1, was written :—

It is an old belief
  That on some solemn shore,
Beyond the sphere of grief,
  Dear friends shall meet once more :

Beyond the sphere of time,
  And sin, and fate's control,
Serene in changeless prime
  Of body and of soul.

That creed I fain would keep,
  This hope I'll not forego ;
Eternal be the sleep,
  If not to waken so.

At Scotsbrig ordinary subjects resumed their interest, and Carlyle began to think again, though not very heartily, of his own work. Tedious business still detained him in Dumfriesshire. He could not leave till he had disposed of the lease of Templand. The agents of the noble Duke could not consistently with their master's dignity, be rapid in their resolutions. Carlyle became impatient, and relieved his feelings in characteristic fashion.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig : April 19, 1842.

Cromwell sometimes rises upon me here, but as a thing lost

in abysses, sunk beyond the horizon, and only throwing up a sad twilight of remembrance. I sometimes think I will pack up all Fuz's books together at my return and send them away. I never yet was in the right track to do that book. Yet Cromwell is with me the fit subject of a book, could I only say of what book. I must yet hang by *him*. But, indeed, if I live, a new epoch will have to unfold itself with me. There are new things, and as yet no new dialect for them. The time of my youth is past; that of my age is not yet fully come.

No Duke's answer can arrive, I suppose, till the end of this week. It is a wonderful relief to me, that I have here got fairly out of the choking, sycophant Duke element, which tempted me at every turn to exclaim, 'May the devil and his grandmother fly away with your shabble of a Duke!' What in God's name have I to do with him? All the Dukes in creation melted into one Duke were not worth sixpence to me. I declare I could not live there at all in such an accursed, soul-oppressing puddle of a Dukery.

April 25.

I believe the thing is in a fair way of being what is to be accounted here as 'finished.' I have seen the Factor and, as it were, come in 'the Lord their God his Grace's will.'

April 31.

Let us be thankful that the sorrowful business, *taliter qualiter*, is over, and no more agitations on that score are to be apprehended for you. As for the house at Chelsea, if *you* like it, do not regard much my dislike of it. I cannot be healthy anywhere under the sun. I am a perceptible degree unhealthier in London than elsewhere; but London, I do feel withal, is the only spot in the earth where I can enjoy something like the blessedness of freedom; and this I ought

to be willing to purchase at the expense of dirt, smoke, tumult, and annoyance of various kinds. I must run into the country when the town gets insupportable to me. But I ought not to quit hold of town. To live in cloth worship of his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch for example—I confess I should hesitate between Monmouth Street and that. Not that, I should say ; anything rather than that.

To-day I have lain on a sofa and read the whole history of the family of Carlyle. Positively not so bad reading. I discover there what illustrious genealogies we have ; a whole regiment of *Thomas* Carlyles, wide possessions, all over Annandale, Cumberland, Durham, gone all now into the uttermost wreck, absorbed into Douglasdom, Drumlanrigdom, and the devil knows what. Two of us have written plays, one could carve organs, sculpture horses ; Mrs. Jameson's old Carlyle was cousin of Bridekirk. I suppose I, too, must have been meant for a Duke, but the means were dropped in the passage.

He had small respect for dukes and such-like, and perhaps Templand would not have answered with him if he had kept it ; but he had a curious pride also in his own family. There was reason to believe that his own father was the actual representative of the Lords Carlyle of Torthorwald ; and, though he laughed when he spoke of it, he was clearly not displeased to know that he had noble blood in him. Rustic as he was in habits, dress, and complexion, he had a knightly, chivalrous temperament, and fine natural courtesy; another sure sign of good breeding was his hand, which was small, perfectly shaped, with long fine fingers and aristocratic finger-nails. He knew well enough, however, that with him, as he was, pedigrees and such-like

had nothing to do. The descent which he prized was the descent from pious and worthy parents, and the fortunes and misfortunes of the neighbouring peasant families were of more real interest to him than aristocratic genealogies.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: May 3, 1842.

My dear Wife,—This is to be the last note I write to you from Scotsbrig on the present occasion. Nothing new is to be communicated. The day has passed over to this hour, four o'clock, without recordable incident. I have been twice upon the moor since six, when I awoke. I have seen poor cattle straying over these barren bogs; poor ploughmen toiling in the red furrow, their ploughshares gleaming in the sun—a most innocuous flash; they and their huts, and their whole existence looking sad, almost pathetic to me. They are very poor in purse, poor in purpose, principle, for the most part in all that makes the wealth of a man.

Poor devils! The farmer of Stennybeck, the next place to this, has a mother stone-blind, whom I remember out of infancy as a brisk, buxom lass that sate in the kirk with me. Utter poverty—financiering equal to a Chancellor's of the Exchequer—has attended them these many years, ever in the near background a gaol; and now yesterday the poor blind woman, searching down some heavy churn from the garret—for she works and bustles all over the house—tumbled through a trapdoor and nearly killed herself. Unfortunate souls! The man asked Jamie one day, 'What d'ye think *will* come of me?' Peel's tariff has taken some twenty pounds from him, and—his Laird is rioting through the world like a broken blackguard. I am wae to look on poor old Annandale, poor old England—the devil is busy with us all.

What a pity a man cannot sleep, and so live something like other men! For the rest, it is no secret to me that he ought still to keep a bridle on himself, and not let insomnolence nor any other perversity drive him beyond limits.

Yesterday I got my hair cropped, partly by my own endeavours in the front, chiefly by sister Jenny's in the rear. I fear you will think it rather an original cut.

It was on Carlyle's return from Scotland, a day or two after the date of this last letter, that he paid the visit to Rugby of which Dean Stanley speaks in his life of Dr. Arnold. Arnold, it will be remembered, had written to Carlyle after reading the 'French Revolution.' He had sympathised warmly also with his tract on 'Chartism,' and his views as to the mights or rights of English working men. Cromwell, who was to be the next subject, was equally interesting to Arnold; and hearing that Carlyle would be passing Rugby, he begged him to pause on the way, when they could examine Naseby field together.

Carlyle, on his side, had much personal respect for the great Arnold—for Arnold himself as a man, though very little for his opinions. He saw men of ability all round him professing orthodoxy and holding office in the Church, while they regarded it merely as an institution of general expediency, with which their private convictions had nothing to do. Such men aimed only at success in the world, and if they chose to sell their souls for it, the article which they parted with was of no particular value. But Arnold was of a higher stamp. While a Liberal in politics and philosophy, and an historical student, he imagined himself a real believer in

the Christian religion, and Carlyle was well assured that to men of Arnold's principles it had no ground to stand on, and that the clear-sighted among them would, before long, have to choose between an honest abandonment of an untenable position, and a trifling with their own understandings which must soon degenerate into conscious insincerity. Arnold, Carlyle once said to me, was happy in being taken away before the alternative was forced upon him. He died, in fact, six weeks after the visit of which the following letter contains the account.

To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries.

Chelsea: May 10, 1842.

I had from Scotsbrig appointed to pause about seventy miles from London, and pay a visit to a certain Oxford dignitary of distinction, one Dr. Arnold, Master of Rugby School. I would willingly have paid five pounds all the day to be honourably off; but it clearly revealed itself to me 'thou should'st veritably go,' so at Birmingham I booked myself and went. Right well that I did so, for the contrary would have looked like the work of a fool; and the people all at Rugby were of especial kindness to me, and I was really glad to have made their acquaintance. Next day they drove me over some fifteen miles off to see the field of Naseby fight—Oliver Cromwell's chief battle, or one of his chief. It was a grand scene for me—Naseby. A venerable hamlet, larger than Middlebie, all built of mud, but trim with high peaked roofs, and two feet thick of smooth thatch on them, and plenty of trees scattered round and among. It is built as on the brow of the Hagheads at Ecclefechan; Cromwell lay with his back to that, and King Charles was drawn up as

at Wull Welsh's—only the Sinclair burn must be mostly dried, and the hollow much wider and deeper. They flew at one another, and Cromwell ultimately 'brashed him all to roons.' I plucked two gowans and a cowslip from the burial heaps of the slain, which still stand as heaps, but sunk away in the middle. At seven o'clock they had me home again, dinnered, and off in the last railway train.

CHAPTER X.

A.D. 1842. ÆT. 47.

Return to London—Sees the House of Commons—Yachting trip to Ostend—Bathing adventure—Church at Bruges—Hotel at Ghent—Reflections on modern music—Walk through the town—A lace girl—An old soldier—Artisans at dinner—The 'Vigilant' and her crew—Visit from Owen—Ride in the Eastern counties—Ely Cathedral—St. Ives—Past and Present.

THE season was not over when Carlyle was again at home after his long absence, but the sad occupations of the spring, and the sad thoughts which they had brought with them, disinclined him for society. The summer opened with heat. He had a room arranged for him at the top of his house at the back, looking over gardens and red roofs and trees, with the river and its barges on his right hand, and the Abbey in the distance. There he sate and smoked, and read books on Cromwell, the sight of Naseby having brought the subject back out of 'the abysses.' Forster's volumes were not sent back to him. Visitors were not admitted, or were left to be entertained in the drawing-room.

June 17.

I sit here (he wrote to his mother), and think of you many a time and of all imaginable things. I say to myself, 'Why should'st thou not be thankful? God is good; all this life is a heavenly miracle, great, though stern and sad.' Poor Jane and her cousin sit in the low room which extends through the whole breadth of the house, and has

windows on both sides. There they sew, read, see company, and keep it out of my way. Poor Jane is still very sad, takes fits of crying, and is perhaps still more sorrowful when she does not cry. I try to get her advised out as much as possible. John Sterling is come to London for these two weeks, home from Italy. He will be a new resource to her; she seems to get no good of anything but the sympathy of her friends.

Of these friends the most actively anxious to be kind were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Buller, with whom Carlyle had been at Kinnaird. Their eldest son, Charles, who had been his pupil, was now in the front rank in the House of Commons. Reginald, the youngest, had a living at Troston, in Suffolk, with a roomy parsonage. His father and mother had arranged to spend July and August there, and they pressed Mrs. Carlyle to go with them for change of scene. Mrs. Carlyle gratefully consented. She liked Mrs. Buller, and the Bullers' ways suited her. It was settled that they were to go first, and she was to follow. Carlyle's own movements were left doubtful. He, after so long an interruption of his work, did not wish to move again immediately; but he was very grateful to Mrs. Buller for her kindness to his wife, and when she asked him in return to go to the House of Commons to hear her son speak, he could not refuse. He had never been there before; I believe he never went again; but it was a thing to see once, and though the sight did not inspire him with reverence, he was amused, and wrote an account of it to his mother.

Mrs. Buller made me go the other night to the House of

Commons to hear Charles speak on the Scotch Church question. The Scotch Church question was found to be in a wrong condition as to *form*, and could not come on till the 5th of July. It struck me as the strangest place I had ever sat in, that same house. There was a humming and bustling, so that you could hear nothing for the most part; the members all sitting with their hats on talking *to one another*, coming and going. You only saw the Speaker, a man in an immense powdered wig, in an old-fashioned elevated chair; and half heard him mumbling 'Say Aye, Say No. The Ayes have it;' passing Bills which nobody except one or two specially concerned cared a fig about, or was at pains to listen to. When a good speaker rose, or an important man, they grew a little more silent, and you could hear. Peel was there and on his feet. Poor Peel! he is really a clever-looking man—large substantial head, Roman nose, massive cheeks with a wrinkle, half smile, half sorrow on them, considerable trunk and stomach, sufficient stubborn-looking short legs; altogether an honest figure of a man. He had a dark-coloured surtout on, and cotton trousers of blue striped jean. A curious man to behold under the summer twilight.

This single glance into the legislative sanctuary satisfied Carlyle's curiosity. Once, in after years, on some invitation from a northern borough, he did for a moment contemplate the possibility of himself belonging to it; but it was for a moment only, and then with no more than a purpose of telling Parliament his opinion of its merits. For it was his fixed conviction that in that place lay not the strength of England, but the weakness of England, and that in time it would become a question which of the two would strangle the life out of the other. Of the debating department

in the management of the affairs of this country he never spoke without contempt. In the administration of them there was still vigour inherited through the traditions of a great past, and kept alive in the spirit of the public service. The navy especially continued a reality. Having seen the House of Commons and the Anarchies, he was next to have a sight of a Queen's ship on a small scale, and of naval discipline.

The thing came about in this way. He could not work in the hot weather, and doubtless lamented as loud as usual about it. Stephen Spring Rice, Commissioner of Customs, was going in an Admiralty yacht to Ostend on public business. The days of steam in the navy were not yet. The yacht, a cutter of the largest size, was lying in Margate roads. Spring Rice and his younger brother were to join her by a Thames steamer on August 5, and the night before they invited Carlyle to go with them. Had there been time to consider, he would have answered 'impossible.' But the proposal came suddenly. Mrs. Carlyle, who was herself going to Troston, strongly urged its acceptance. The expedition was not to occupy more than four or five days. Carlyle was always well at sea. In short, he agreed, and the result was summed up in a narrative, written in his very best style, which he termed 'The Shortest Tour on Record.' He was well, he was in good humour; he was flung suddenly among scenes and people entirely new. Of all men whom I have ever known, he had the greatest power of taking in and remembering the minute particulars of what he saw and heard, and of then reproducing them in language. The tour, if one of the shortest, is also there-

fore one of the most vivid. It opens with an account of the run down the river, the steamer, the passengers, Herne Bay, Margate, &c. The yacht was waiting at anchor with her long pennon flying. As the steamer stopped the yacht's galley came alongside. The Spring Rices and Carlyle stepped into it and were rowed on board, and he made his first experience of an English cruiser, of a type which is now extinct.

> The cutter 'Vigilant,' which rocked here upon the waters, is a smart little trim ship of some 250 tons, rigged, fitted, kept and navigated in the highest style of English seacraft; made every way for sailing fast, that she may catch smugglers. Outside and inside, in furniture, equipment, action, and look, she seemed a model—clean all as a lady's workbox.

The party dined on board. They were not to sail till the morning tide. The lights of Margate looked inviting in the height of its season, and they went on shore to stroll about and look at the sights. Nor look at them only, for they were tempted into the ball-room, when the Master of the Ceremonies came instantly with offers of fair partners. Carlyle looked on grimly; but Stephen Spring Rice whirled away into waltzes, quadrilles, country-dances—not to be moved from the place till the rooms were to be closed. 'Auld Robin Gray' was sung as a finale by 'a very ill-looking woman.' It was by this time midnight. They went back to the yacht and turned in. The anchor was up shortly after, and before dawn they were far on their way. 'My sleep,' Carlyle says, 'was a sleep as of hospitals, of men in a state of asphyxia, a confused tumult, a shifting from headache to headache.' After

three hours he gave it up and went on deck, when he found the cutter flying through the water. By breakfast they had run down the land—by ten o'clock in the evening they were off Ostend. Even now such vessels as the 'Vigilant,' with a stiff breeze, can hold their own with a swift screw steamer, while they have the advantage infinitely in comfort and cleanliness.

Ostend itself, with its harbour, its Douane, streets, ramparts, hotels, shop-boys and shop-girls, is described at length and very humorously. I select a single incident only. They landed in the morning, and wandered about the town. They were to go on by train to Bruges after a midday dinner. The weather was hot. The Spring Rices were busy sight-seeing. Carlyle thought he would prefer a bathe, and forgot, or did not know, the regulations. He must himself tell what befell him.

I passed over an unpaved part of the height, and soon sloped down to the sand beach where the machines stood ; where some score of ragged women sat sorting and freshening the *salt* towels, some cheering themselves with a loud song the while ; when directly a freckled figure, with tow hair, barefoot and in blue blouse, volunteered in some kind of patois to do the bathing, and straightway showed me into his machine and shut the door.

I was stripped and ready by the time the blue-blouses quadruped, one of the wretchedest garrons now alive, came to drag me in. I was dragged in nevertheless. I opened my door and plunged forward to one of the most delicious tepid sea baths, though as yet somewhat shallow. Alas ! I made only some three plunges and a stroke or two of swimming, when the blue blouse, in a state not far from dis-

traction, came riding into the waves after me, vociferating with uplifted hand I knew not what. Wow! Gow! Wow! Nay at length something like Police! Wow! Gow! and evidently expressing the intensest desire that I should come out of the water again. Clearly I had no alternative, with a man in blue blouse mounted in that manner. On entering I could not but burst into laughing. I found that, men and women, we were all bathing here in a heap, and that among my apparatus were not only two huckaback towels but a jacket and breeches of blue gingham, which I decidedly ought to have put on first. My three plunges, however, were enough, highly beneficial—and no Police Gow-wow, as it chanced, had meddled with me.

Dinner followed, and then the railway in the August afternoon to Bruges; Carlyle sketching the landscape on his memory as he went.

Sand downs and stagnating marshes, producing nothing but heath, but sedges, docks, marsh-mallows, and miasmata—so it lay by nature; but the industry of man, the assiduous, unwearied motion of how many spades, pickaxes, hammers, wheel-barrows, masons' trowels, and the thousandfold industrial tools have made it—this! A thing that will grow grass, potherbs, warehouses, Rubens's pictures, churches and cathedrals. Long before Cæsar's time of swords the era of spades had ushered itself in, and was busy. Tools and the Man! 'Arms and the Man' is but a small song in comparison. Honour to you, ye long forgotten generations, from whom at this moment we have our bread and clothing! Not a delver among you that dug out one shovelful of a marsh drain but was doing us a good turn.

Bruges in the thirteenth century had become the 'Venice of the North,' had its ships on every sea. The most important

city in these latitudes was founded in a soil which, as Coleridge, with a poor sneer, declares was not of God's making, but of man's. All the more credit to man, Mr. Samuel Taylor.

The eye, Carlyle often says, sees only what it brings with it the means of seeing. The ordinary London traveller on the road between Ostend and Bruges perceives a country finely cultivated. He is pleased to approve; observes that these foreigners are not so backward as might have been expected, and that is all; Carlyle saw all that, and saw all that lay behind it —a miracle of human industry, two millenniums of human history.

As they walked from the station through the streets of that strange old city, they were themselves objects of admiration to the inhabitants. He goes on :—

The Captain[1] and I had a rational English costume, different, yet not greatly different, from theirs ; but the costume of our two brethren did seem to myself astonishing ; the Home Commissioner in a pair of coarsest blue shag trousers, with a horrible blue shag spencer without waistcoat, and a scanty blue cap on his head, had a truly *flibustier* air. The good Charles had a low-crowned, broad-brimmed glazed hat, ugliest of hats, and one of those amazing sack coats which the English dandies have taken to wear, the make of which is the simplest. One straight sack to hold your body, two smaller sacks on top for the arms, and by way of collar a *hem.* The earliest tailor on the earth would make his coat even so ; and the Bond Street snip has returned to that as

[1] The captain of the yacht, who had accompanied them.

elegance. Oh, ineffable snip of Bond Street, what a thing art thou!

In the Market-place they passed an authentic 'Tree of Liberty,' which had been planted in 1794, and was still growing. Carlyle patted it with his hand as they went by. He admired greatly the quaint old buildings, the pretty women neatly dressed. Among the children he emptied his pockets of his loose money. The door of a magnificent church stood open. They entered in the evening light.

Few things (he says) which I have seen were more impressive. Enormous high arched roofs—I suppose, not higher than Westminster Abbey, but far more striking to me, for they were actually in *use* here—soaring to a height that dwarfed all else; great high altar-pieces with sculpture, wooden carvings hanging in mid-air, pillars, balustrades of white marble edged with black marble, pictures, inscriptions, bronze gates of chapels, shrines and votive tablets; above all, actual human creatures bent in devotion there, counting their beads with open eyes, or as in still deeper prayer, covered by their black scarfs—for they were mostly women—and only their little pointed shoe soles distinct to you; all this with the yellow evening sunlight falling down over and beneath the new and ancient tombs of the dead; it struck me dumb, and I cared nothing for Rubens or Vandyck canvases while this living painted canvas hung here before me on the bosom of eternity. The Mass was over, but these worshippers, it seemed, still loitered. You could not say from their air that they were without devotion—yet they were painful to me. The fat priests, in whose real *sincerity*, not in whose *sincere cant*, I had more difficulty in believing, were worse than painful. I had a kind of hatred of them, a

desire to kick them into the canals unless they ceased their fooling.

Things are long-lived, and God above appoints their term. Yet when the brains of a thing have been out for three centuries and odd, one does wish that it would be kind enough to die. The tonsures of these priests, I observed, were very small, not bigger than a good crown-piece of English coin. They wore on the streets a horrid three-cornered shovel for hat, a black serge or cloth pelisse, exactly like a woman's, some sasheries about their nasty thick waists, and a narrow scarf of black silk—about a triple ribbon of silk—hanging down right behind from their haunches, sometimes from the very neck—oftenest very ugly men, and far too fat. At bottom one cannot *wish* these men kicked into the canals, for what would follow were they gone? Atheistic Benthamism, French Editorial 'rights of man,' and 'Grande Nation.' That is a far worse thing, a far untruer thing. God pity the generation in which you have to see deluded and deluding *simulacra*, Tartuffes and semi-Tartuffes, and to *stay* the uplifted foot, and not kick them into the canal, but go away near weeping in silence—alone—alone!

He often ferociously insisted that he knew nothing about the fine arts, and wished to know nothing. His abhorrence of cant was particularly active in this department; aware as he was that nine-tenths of those who talked most fluently about it were talking mere words. But he had as good an eye as any man, and could admire wisely what deserved to be admired.

In the second church we entered there was, among much else of the sort, a marble Mother and Child, by Michael Angelo; probably the most impressive piece of sculpture I

ever saw. Michael Angelo had made it for some Italian church. On its passage, in the Mediterranean, it was captured by some Flemish sea-king and given to this church, where it stands in perfect preservation, and may long stand. The treatment of the *eyes* is singular, the lids as if half shut —Angelo's way of meeting the difficulty of stone eyes. The sculptural finish, I suppose, is perfect, or the nearest perfection man has yet reached. The skin glistens sleek, waves with a softness as of very skin. The air of the mother's face has something of Rachel the actress : narrow, Jewish, though not quite so narrow and Jewish ; bending, with an air of sorrow, of infinite earnestness, over her little boy, who stands before her supported by her. The boy's face struck me not less ; a soft, child's face, yet with a pride in it, with a noble courage in it, as of a young lion. There is a child hand, and a mother's hand, which I suppose it might be difficult to match.

The travellers' time was short, and there was much to do in it. The afternoon and evening were allowed to Bruges. At dusk they proceeded by railway to Ghent, where they proposed to sleep at the Hôtel de Flandre. But, for one of them, to propose was easier than to execute. The night was sultry. The open window of Carlyle's bed-room looked into a courtyard with its miscellaneous noises ; and at four o'clock, with day breaking and the church bells bursting out, he grew desperate and got up. He exclaims :—

How the ear of man is tortured in this terrestrial planet ! Go where you will, the cock's shrill clarion, the dog's harsh watch note, not to speak of the melody of jackasses, and on streets, of wheel-barrows, wooden clogs, loud-voiced men, perhaps watchmen, break upon the hapless brain ; and, as if

all was not enough, 'the Piety of the Middle Ages' has founded tremendous bells; and the hollow triviality of the present age—far worse—has everywhere instituted the piano! Why are not at least all those cocks and cockerils boiled into soup, into everlasting silence? Or, if the Devil some good night should take his hammer and smite in shivers all and every piano of our European world, so that in broad Europe there were not one piano left soundable, would the harm be great? Would not, on the contrary, the relief be considerable? For once that you hear any real music from a piano, do you not five hundred times hear mere artistic somersets, distracted jangling, and the hapless pretence of music? Let him that has lodged wall neighbour to an operatic artist of stringed music say.

This miserable young woman that now in the next house to me spends all her young, bright days, not in learning to darn stockings, sew shirts, bake pastry, or any art, mystery, or business that will profit herself or others; not even in amusing herself or skipping on the grassplots with laughter of her mates; but simply and solely in raging from dawn to dusk, to night and midnight, on a hapless piano, which it is evident she will never in this world learn to render more musical than a pair of barn-fanners! The miserable young female! The sound of her through the wall is to me an emblem of the whole distracted misery of this age; and her barn-fanners' rhythm becomes all too significant.

So meditated Carlyle, as he sat smoking at the window of his room in the Hôtel de Flandre at Ghent, and watching the dawn spread over the chimney-pots. An omnibus rolled slowly out of the gate of the yard; an old ostler sat mending a saddle on a bench. The bedroom windows all round the court were wide open

through which might be seen the usual litter, and in one instance for a moment a pretty young lady in a dressing-gown. He tried to sleep again when his pipe and his reflections were done, and had half succeeded when the great bell of St. Michael's boomed out close by, and threw him broad awake again, thinking how perhaps Philip Van Artevelde had listened to that very same bell; and how the pealing of it was, perhaps, the first sound that had struck the ear of the infant who was afterwards Charles V.

After breakfast the party separated on their various errands, having fixed on a spot where they were to meet in the course of the forenoon. The rendezvous was unsuccessful; and Carlyle, not sorry to escape from picture galleries, passed his morning alone, wandering about the city, looking at the people, and straying into an occasional church. At the Cathedral he says:—

I found a large squadron of priests and singers busy chanting Mass—a Mass for the dead, I understood. The sound of them was as a loud, not unmelodious bray in various notes of the gamut, from clamorous, eager sound of petitioning, down to the depths of bass resignation, awe, or acquiescence, which, reverberating from the vast roof and walls, was, or might at one time have been, a very appropriate thing. I grudge terribly to listen to any 'office for the dead' as to a piece of an opera. The priests while I was there took their departure, 'filthy hallions,' by a side passage, each with a small bow towards the altar, and left the rest of the affair to an effective enough squadron of singers and trumpet or bassoon men, who were seated gravely at work in their wooden pews in the choir. Aloft and around, as I perambu-

lated the aisles, where some few poor people seemed faintly joining in the business, the view was magnificent. The noisy, hoarse growling of the Mass, roaring through these time-honoured spaces, and still calling itself worship! *Ach Gott!* Turner says, the Lama Liturgy in Thibet, which often goes on all night, is likewise distinguished for its noise; harsh, but deep, mournfully impressive, and reminds you of the Mass.

In an outer corner of this Cathedral, opening from a solitary street in the rear, I found a little chapel with an old Gothic-arch door, which stood open. Approaching, I found it a little closet of a place, perhaps some ten feet square and fifteen high. In the wall right opposite the entrance was a little niche, dizened round with curtains, laces, votive tablet of teeth, &c.; at the side of it, within this niche, sate a dizened paltry doll, some three feet long, done with paint, ribbons, and ruffles. This was the Mother of God. On the left of it lay a much smaller doll (literally, they were dolls such as children have). This was itself God. Good heavens! Oh, ancient earth and sky! Before this pair of dolls sate, in very deed, some half-dozen women, not of the lowest class, some of them with young children, busy counting their beads, applying themselves to prayer. I gazed speechless—not in anger. An aged woman in decent black hood, perhaps a man, sate in a little sentry-box in the corner, looking on through a small window, silently superintending the place. They bowed to her before going out when their devotions were done. While I stood here for a moment there entered a stunted crooked-looking man, of the most toilworn down-pressed aspect, though still below middle age. He had the coarse sabots, leathern straps on him, like a chairman or porter; his hands hard, crooked, black, the nails nearly all gone, hardly the eighth of an inch of nail belonging to each finger—fruit of sore labour all his days and all his father's

days, the most perfect image of a poor drudge. He, poor drudge! put two of his horny fingers into the holy water, dabbed it on his brow, and, folding the black horn hands, sank on both his knees to pray. The low black head and small brow, nailless fingers, face and aspect like the poorest Irishman, praying to the two dolls there! You had to stand speechless. *L'homme est absurde.* At the door sate squatted a poor beggar woman, to whom I gave my sou and walked off.

Strolling aimlessly on, he next found himself in a street on the north side of the city, which reminded him of England. It was inhabited by a population 'equal in wretchedness to the worst of a British large town,' squalid, hungry, hopeless, miserable. Yet, even there, human grace was not wholly absent. The next passage is like a page from the 'Sentimental Journey:'—

One clean house, and perhaps only one, I noticed in the street. An elderly, or rather *oldish young*, woman sat working lace here with her green pillow and pattern marked on it with many pins, which she shifted according to need, and some fifty or sixty slim little thread bobbins, which she kept dancing hither and thither round and among the said pins on her pattern figure with astonishing celerity. '*Kan nit verstahn*,' answered she, when I said '*Dentelle*.' Her messin dog barked, but was rebuked by her, and she seemed to like that I should watch her a little. Poor 'oldish-young girl!' I could see how it was with her. She had missed getting married: perhaps by 'misfortune;' and now retreated to this small shelter, which, and all in it, she kept clean as a new penny. She was to plait lace for the rest

of her time in this world. I laid a half-franc on her pillow, and went pensively my way.

Carlyle's grimly tender face and figure with this poor Ghent lace-girl would make a pretty picture, if any artist cared to draw it. Perhaps the next scene would be even better:—

Aloft, at the north-west extremity, stands the *Abbaye de St. Pierre*, part of it still a church, the rest of it still a barracks and an elevated esplanade. An accurate-looking steel-grey man, whom I spoke to here, in answer to my inquiries, informed me that he was an *ancien militaire* (poor Belgian half-pay lieutenant, I suppose), and had fought against us English and the Duke of York in 1793. 'Vous l'avez bien battu,' I answered; 'et enfin c'est ce qu'il a mérité. Il n'avait que rester chez lui alors, je pense.' The steel-grey man squeezed my hand at parting. Poor *ancien momie militaire!* Precisely where the town ended, in the rear of a brown cottage, stood a young woman, dabble dabbling with linens in a wash-tub. Conquering heroes perambulate the world where so much is going on, and this is thy share in its history. Good-bye to thee, my girl, and see thou do thy washing *honestly*. It will then be well with thee, and better than with most quack egoists, never so conquering.

He made his way back, looking for his friends, to the centre of the city.

Soon after noon, the working people, generally in cleanish blouses, came along the street I was in, for dinner. Cotton people, I supposed. About a half were women, also very clean and decent-looking. I sate down amidst the trees in the chief square, called *Place d'Armes*, where now, also,

labourers were sitting at dinner. Their wives or some little boy had brought it out to them. In all cases it appeared to consist of two parts—a coarse brown jug containing liquor, soup, oftenest beer, or skimmed milk, flanked by a slice or two of black rye bread. This formed the outflank of the repast. The main battle was a coarse brown stewpan of glazed crockery, narrower at the top, like a kind of small rude hemisphere of a dish, which uniformly contained potatoes stewed with bits of broken coarse meal, all in a moist state, eaten ravenously with a pewter fork. The dishes, I judged, had all been cooked in some common oven for a sou or so each. The good wife had sate by in a composed sorrowfully satisfied way seeing her good man eat. What he left, before taking to the liquor jug, he carelessly handed her, and she ate it with much more neatness, though also willingly enough. Good motherkin! But the appetite of the male sex was something great. A man not far from me, a weak-built figure, almost *without chin*, shovelled and forked with astonishing alacrity out of his stewpan, his protrusive eyes flashing all the while, and his loose eyebrows shuttling and jerking at every stroke, the whole face of him a devouring Chimæra. He gave the remnant—a small one, I doubt—to his boy, snatched up the black bread, and made a cut in it at the first bite equal to a moderate horseshoe. Poor fellows! They all wiped their mouths, I could see, with some kind of dim cotton handkerchief, drawn from their blouses for that end. They tumbled themselves down for half an hour of deepest ambrosial sleep.

The cafés, the clubs, the fine houses, the west end of Ghent with its fashionable occupants, are described not unkindly, but as of inferior interest to the working people. All that may be passed over, and indeed the rest of the adventures, for little remains to tell.

He and his friends, who had spent their day in the picture galleries, met duly at the *table-d'hôte* dinner. At five in the evening they were in the train, and at midnight in their berths on board their yacht, running out into the North Sea. The wind fell in the morning, and they were becalmed. They sighted the North Foreland before night, but the air was still light; and it was not till the next day that they were fairly in the river. Then a rattling breeze sprang up, and the 'Vigilant,' with her vast mainsail, her vast balloon jib, with all the canvas set which she could carry, flew through the water, passing sailing vessels, passing steamers, passing everything. They carried on as if they were entered for a racing cup. The jib, of too light material for such hard driving, split with a report like a cannon. Carlyle saw 'the Captain's eyes twinkle; no other change.' In ten minutes the flying wreck was gathered in, another jib was set and standing in the place of it, and the yacht sped on as before. 'To see men so perfect in their craft, fit for their work, and fitly ordered to it,' was a real consolation to him. There was something still left in the public service of England which had survived Parliamentary eloquence. They anchored at Deptford, and the gig was lowered to take the party up to London.

Five rowers with a boatswain; men unsurpassable, I do not doubt, in boat navigation, strong tall men, all clean shaved, clean washed, in clean blue trousers, in massive clean check shirts, their black neckcloths tied round their waists, their large clean brown hands, cunning in the craft

of the sea—it was a kind of joy to look at it all. In few minutes they shot us into the Custom House stairs, and here, waving our mild farewells, our travel's history concluded. Thus had kind destiny projected us rocket-wise for a little space into the clear blue of heaven and freedom. Thus again were we swiftly reabsorbed into the great smoky simmering crater, and London's soot volcano had again recovered us.

His wife was still at Cheyne Row when he came back. The day after—August 10—she went off on the promised visit to the Bullers at Troston, of which she gives an account so humorous in the 'Letters and Memorials.' Her husband stayed behind with a half purpose of following her at the end of the month, and occupied himself in writing down the story of his flight into the other world, the lightest and brightest of all tourist diaries. He gave five days to it, seeing few visitors in his wife's absence. One new acquaintance, however, he did make in those days, or, rather, one was offered for acceptance, which he always afterwards counted among his good possessions.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, at Troston.

Chelsea: Friday, August 20, 1842.

The day before yesterday, in the evening, I had fallen asleep on the sofa: a loud door-knock woke me; in the twilight, the tea standing on the table, a man entered in white trousers, whom Helen (not the servant) named—Œdipus knows what! some mere mumble. In my dim condition I took him for Mackintosh: 'he was empowered to call on me by Miss Fox, of Falmouth.' He got seated; disclosed himself as a man of huge, coarse head, with projecting

brow and chin, like a cheese in the *last* quarter, with a pair of large protrusive glittering eyes, which he did not direct to me or to anybody, but sate staring into the blue vague. There he sate and talked in a copious but altogether vague way, like a man lecturing, like a man hurried, embarrassed, and not knowing well what to do. I thought with myself, 'Good heavens! can this be some vagrant Yankee, lion-hunting insipidity, biped perhaps escaped from Bedlam, coming in upon me by stealth?' He talked a minute longer. He proved to be Owen, the geological anatomist, a man of real faculty, whom I had wished to see. My recognition of him issued in peals of laughter, and I got two hours of excellent talk out of him—a man of real ability, who could tell me innumerable things. After his departure I asked Helen what she had called him. 'She did not know; but was quite sure it was his right name, at any rate.' What an assistant this little damsel would have been to Adam when names were just beginning!

The more Carlyle thought of Owen the better he liked him, and the more grateful he felt to Miss Fox for the acquisition. Sterling had known Owen at Falmouth, where he had been on a visit to the Foxes. Carlyle wrote to him about it.

To John Sterling.

Chelsea: August 29.

Your friend Owen, the naturalist, came down to me one evening and stayed two hours. I returned his call yesterday with my brother, and went over his museum. He is a man of real talent and worth, an extremely rare kind of man. Hardly twice in London have I met with any articulate-speaking biped who told me a thirtieth part so many things

I knew not and wanted to know. It was almost like to make me cry to hear articulate human speech once more conveying real information to me, not dancing on airy tiptoes, no whence and no whither, as the manner of the Cockney dialect is. God's forgiveness to all Cockney 'men of wit;' they know not what death and Gehenna does lurk in that laborious inanity of theirs—inane speech, the pretence of saying something when you are really saying *No* THING, but only counterfeits of things, is the beginning and basis of all other inanities whatsoever, wherewith the earth and England is now sick almost unto death.

He is reproached for having spoken contemptuously of contemporary 'men of letters.' His contempt was only for empty men of letters, the beginning and end of whose occupation was blowing bubbles either in verse or prose. He had no contempt for any man who had genuine knowledge, nor indeed for anybody at all who was contented to be simple and without pretence. An acquaintance like Owen made life itself more rich to him. Two days later he followed his wife into Suffolk. Charles Buller, who was to have met him at Troston, had not arrived, and, to use the time profitably, he obtained a horse of the completest Rosinante species, and set off for a ride through Oliver Cromwell's country. His first halt was at Ely. He arrived in the evening, and walked into the cathedral, which, though fresh from Bruges and Ghent, he called 'one of the most impressive buildings he had ever in his life seen.' It was empty apparently. No living thing was to be seen in the whole vast building but a solitary sparrow, when suddenly some invisible hand touched the organ,

and the rolling sounds, soft, sweet, and solemn, went pealing through the solitary aisles. He was greatly affected. He had come to look at the spot where Oliver had called down out of his reading-desk a refractory High Church clergyman, and he had encountered a scene which seemed a rebuke to his fierceness. 'I believe,' he said, 'this Ely Cathedral is one of the finest, as they call it, in all England; and from me, also, few masses of architecture could win more admiration. But I recoil everywhere from treating these things as a *dilettantism* at all. The impressions they give me are too deep and sad to have anything to do with the shape of stones. To-night, as the heaving bellows blew, and the yellow sunshine streamed in through those high windows, and my footfalls were the only sounds below, I looked aloft, and my eyes filled with tears at all this, and I remembered beside it —wedded to it now and *reconciled* to it for ever—Oliver Cromwell's "Cease your fooling, and come out, sir!" In these two antagonisms lie what volumes of meaning!'

Where Carlyle went on this expedition, and what he saw, he described in a letter to his brother John when it was over.

To John Carlyle.

Troston: September 9, 1842.

My grand adventure has been a ride of three days into Cromwelldom, which I actually accomplished on my heavy-footed beast, with endless labour, dispiritment, and annoyance, but also with adequate interest, profit, and satisfaction

to many feelings. I went first to Ely, a ride of thirty miles, most of it lanes and cross-roads. At length the high Cathedral of Ely rises towering on a hill-top over an immensity of cultivated bog, a very venerable-looking place. I then by some industry found Oliver's house. The huge horseblock at his door is still lying there; I brought away a crumb of it in my pocket. The bells of Ely and some treacherous green tea &c. kept me awake near all night. Next day, my horse and self both in very bad case, I got on to St. Ives, Oliver's first farm, sate and smoked one of your cigars in a field which had been *his*—very curious to me. The traditions about him in that region are the vaguest conceivable—such is immortality so called. I wonder what a Pitt or a Peel will amount to in two centuries in comparison. 'Immortality!' as my father would have said, with one of his sharpest intonations. After two hours at St. Ives, a little place of some three thousand people, I moved off to Huntingdon, Oliver's birthplace; saw Hinchinbrook, which was his uncle's house, and contains some excellent portraits of Civil War people; dined hastily, and rode with terrible determination to Cambridge the same evening. I never in my life was thirstier or wearier. The lightning flashed and blazed on the right hand of me all over the south from nightfall; and about an hour after my arrival (about ten o'clock, that is) the thunder began in right earnest. Next morning I looked diligently at all colleges within reach; saw Oliver's picture in his Sidney-Sussex College; got under way again in a high wind which became thick driving rain, and about five I arrived here sound and safe. To-day, of course, I am in a very baked, hot, feverish condition.

Cromwell had been Carlyle's first thought in this riding expedition, but other subjects, as I have said, were rising between him and the Commonwealth. At

St. Ives he had seen and noted more than Cromwell's farm. He had seen St. Ives poorhouse, and the paupers sitting enchanted in the sun, willing to work, but with no work provided for them. In his Journal for the 25th of October he mentions that he has been reading Eadmer, and Jocelyn de Brakelonde's Chronicle, and been meditating on the old monks' life in St. Edmund's monastery. Round these, as an incipient motive, another book was shaping itself in his mind, and making 'Cromwell' impossible till this should be done.

To Thomas Erskine, Esq.

Chelsea: October 22, 1842.

I wish all men knew and saw in very truth, as Emerson does, the everlasting worth, dignity, and blessedness of work. We should then terminate our Fox-hunting, Almacking, Corn-lawing, and a variety of other things! For myself, I feel daily more and more what a truth there is in that old saying of the monks, *Laborare est orare.* I find really that a man cannot make a pair of shoes rightly unless he do it in a *devout* manner; that no man is ever paid for his real work, or should *ever* expect or demand angrily to be paid; that all *work* properly so called is an appeal from the Seen to the *Unseen*—a devout calling upon Higher Powers; and unless *they* stand by us, it will not be a work, but a quackery.

Perhaps I should tell you, withal, that a set of headlong enthusiasts have already risen up in America who, grounding themselves on these notions of Emerson, decide on *renouncing* the world and its ways somewhat in the style of the old eremites of the Thebaid; and retire into remote rural places to dig and delve with their own hands, 'to live according to Nature and Truth,' and for one thing eat vegetables only.

We had a missionary of that kind here—a man of sincere convictions, but of the deepest ignorance, and calmly arrogant as an *inspired* man may be supposed to be—on the whole, one of the intensest bores I have ever met with. He made no proselytes in this quarter; but the spiritual state of New England as rendered visible through him was very strange to me. . . .

I had three days of a riding excursion into Oliver Cromwell's country. I smoked a cigar on his broken horseblock in the old city of Ely, under the stars, beside the graves of St. Mary's Churchyard. I almost wept to stand upon the very flagstones under the setting sun where he ordered the refractory parson, 'Leave off your fooling, and *come out*, sir!' Alas! he too! was he *paid* for his work?

Do not ask me whether I yet *write* about Oliver. My deep and growing feeling is that it is *impossible*. The mighty has gone to be a ghost, and will never take body again.

CHAPTER XI.

A.D. 1842-3. ÆT. 47-48.

Slow progress with 'Cromwell'—Condition of England question—'Past and Present'—The Dismal Science—Letter from Lockhart—Effect of Carlyle's writings on his contemporaries—Young Oxford—Reviews—Visit to South Wales—Mr. Redwood's visit to the Bishop of St. David's—Impressions—An inn at Gloucester—Father Mathew—Retreat in Annandale—Edinburgh—Dunbar battle-field—Return home.

Journal.

October 25, 1842.—For many months there has been no writing here. Alas! what was there to write? About myself, nothing; or less if that was possible. I have not got one word to stand upon paper in regard to Oliver. The beginnings of work are even more formidable than the executing of it. I seem to myself at present, and for a long while past, to be sunk deep, fifty miles deep, below the region of articulation, and, if I ever rise to speak again, must raise whole continents with me. Some hundreds of times I have felt, and scores of times I have said and written, that *Oliver* is an *impossibility;* yet I am still found at it, without any visible results at all. Remorse, too, for my sinful, disgraceful sloth accompanies me, as it well may. I am, as it were, without a language. Tons of dull books have I read on this matter, and it is still only looming as through thick mists on my eye. There looming, or flaming visible—did it ever flame, which it has never yet been made to do—in what terms am I to set it forth? I wish often I could write rhyme. A

new form from centre to surface, unlike what I find anywhere in myself or others, would alone be appropriate for the indescribable chiaroscuro and waste bewilderment of this subject.

And elsewhere—

December 21.—The Preadamite powers of Chaos are in me, and my soul, with excess of stupidity, pusillanimity, tailor melancholy, and approaches of mere desperation and dog-madness, is as if blotted out. Strange to reflect, during a three days' rain, when all is mud and misery here below, that a few miles up there *is* everlasting azure, and the sun shining as formerly. No Cromwell will ever come out of me in this world. I dare not even try Cromwell.

Carlyle *was* to try Cromwell, and was to clothe the ghost with body again, impossible as the operation seemed; but he had to raise another ghost first—an old Catholic ghost—before he could practise on the Puritans.

Events move so fast in this century, one crowding another out of sight, that most of us who were alive in 1842 have forgotten how menacing public affairs were looking in the autumn of that year. Trade was slack, owing, it was said, to the corn-laws, and hundreds of thousands of operatives were out of work. Bread was dear, owing certainly to the corn-laws, and actual famine was in the northern towns; while the noble lords and gentlemen were shooting their grouse as usual. There was no insurrection, but the 'hands,' unwillingly idle, gathered in the streets in dumb protest. The poor-houses overflowed, and could hold no more; local riots

brought out the yeomanry, landowners and farmers, to put down the artisans, who were short of bread for their families, lest foreign competition should bring down rents and farmers' profits. Town and country were ranked against each other for the last time. Never any more was such a scene to be witnessed in England.

In his Suffolk ride Carlyle had seen similar scenes of misery. Indignation blazed up in him at the sight of England with its enormous wealth and haggard poverty; the earth would not endure it, he thought. The rage of famished millions, held in check only by the invisible restraints of habit and traditional order, would boil over at last. In England, as in France, if the favoured classes did not look better to their ways, revolution would and must come; and if it could create nothing, might at least shatter society to pieces. His 'Chartism' had been read and wondered over, but his prophecies had been laughed at, and the symptoms had grown worse. The corn-laws, it is to be remembered, were still standing. If they had continued to stand, if the growl of the hungry people had not been heard and the meaning of it discerned, most of us think that revolution would have come, and that Carlyle's view of the matter was right.

Between him and all other work, dragging off his mind from it, lay the condition of England question. Even if the dread of revolution was a chimæra, the degradation of the once great English people, absorbed, all of them, in a rage for gold and pleasure, was itself sufficient to stir his fury. He believed that every man had a special duty to do in this world. If he had been asked what specially he conceived his own duty to be,

he would have said that it was to force men to realise once more that the world was actually governed by a just God; that the old familiar story acknowledged everywhere in words on Sundays, and disregarded or denied openly on week-days, was, after all, true. His writings, every one of them, his essays, his lectures, his 'History of the French Revolution,' his 'Cromwell,' even his 'Frederick,' were to the same purpose and on the same text—that truth must be spoken and justice must be done; on any other conditions no real commonwealth, no common welfare, is permitted or possible. Political economy maintained that the distribution of the profits of industry depended on natural laws, with which morality had nothing to do. Carlyle insisted that morality was everywhere, through the whole range of human action. As long as men were allowed to believe that their business in this world was each to struggle for as large a share as he could get of earthly good things, they were living in a delusion with hearts poisoned and intellect misled. Those who seemed to prosper under such methods, and piled up huge fortunes, would gather no good out of them. The multitude whose own toil produced what they were forbidden to share would sooner or later present their bill for payment, and demand a reckoning.

The scenes in the north of England in this summer —from this point of view—seemed only too natural to him. On August 20 he wrote to his wife at Troston:—

The Manchester insurrection continues—the tenth day of it now. I begin really to be anxious about it, and wish it were well over, that blood be not shed, and seeds of long

baleful vengeance sown. A country in a lamentabler state, to my eyes, than ours even now, has rarely shown itself under the sun. We seem to me near anarchies, things nameless, and a secret voice whispers now and then to me, 'Thou, behold thou too art of it—thou must be of it!' I declare to Heaven I would not have the governing of this England at present for the richest 'cream and shortbread' that could be named.

Men say that he was an idle croaker, and that events have proved it. All was really going well. The bubbles on the surface were only the signs of the depth and power of the stream. There has been no revolution, no anarchy; wealth has enormously increased; the working men are better off than ever they were, &c. &c.

In part, yes. But how much has been done meanwhile of what he recommended? and how much of that is due to the effect which he himself produced? The corn-laws have been repealed, and this alone he said at the time would give us a respite of thirty years to set our house in order. *Laissez-faire* has been broken in upon by factory acts, education acts, land acts, emigration schemes, schemes and acts on all sides of us, that patience and industry may be snatched from the 'grinding' of 'natural laws.' The 'dismal science' has been relegated to 'Jupiter and Saturn;' and these efforts have served as lightning-conductors. If we are safe now, we should rather thank him who, more than any other man, forced open the eyes of our legislators.

Forty years ago people were saying with Jeffrey that it was true that there were many lies in the world, and much injustice, but then it had always been so. Our

forefathers had been as ill off as we, and probably—nay, certainly—worse off. Carlyle had insisted that no nation could have grown at all, still less have grown to England's stature, unless truer theories of man's claims on man had once been believed and acted on. Whigs and Radicals assured him that the older methods, so far as they differed from ours, were less just and less wise; that, although the artisans and labourers might be ill off occasionally, they were freer, happier, better clothed, better lodged, more enlightened, than in any previous age, and they challenged him to point to a time in English history which could honestly be preferred to the present. Jocelyn's Chronicle coming accidentally across him, with its singularly vivid picture of English life in the twelfth century, gave him the impulse which he needed to answer them, and 'Past and Present' was written off with singular ease in the first seven weeks of 1843. His heart was in his subject. He got the book completed, strange to say, without preliminary labour-pangs, and without leaving in his correspondence, during the process of birth, a single cry of complaint. The style shows no trace of rapid composition, unless in the white-heat intensity of expression, nor is it savage and scornful anywhere, but rather (for Carlyle) candid and considerate. The arrangement is awkward—as awkward as that of 'Sartor'—for indeed there is no arrangment at all; and yet, as a whole, the book made a more immediate mark than anything which Carlyle had hitherto written. Prophetic utterances seldom fall into harmonious form; they do not need it, and they will not bear it. Three letters remain, written during the parturition, in which he explained

what he was about. To his mother he says, early in January:—

My health keeps good, better than it used to do. I am fast getting ready something for publication too. Though it is not 'Cromwell' yet, it is something more immediately applicable to the times in hand. I do hope you will see it soon, though it is a terrible business getting a thing wriggled out of the confusions it stands amidst, and made ready for presenting to mankind. It is like building a dry brick house out of a quagmire of clay and glar.[1]

The distress of the poor, I apprehend, is less here at present than in almost any other large town, yet you cannot walk along the streets without seeing frightful symptoms of it. I declare I begin to feel as if I should not hold my peace any longer, as if I should perhaps open my mouth in a way that some of them are not expecting—we shall see if this book were done.

Again:—

January 20.

I hope it will be a rather useful kind of book. It goes rather in a fiery strain about the present condition of men in general, and the strange pass they are coming to; and I calculate it may awaken here and there a slumbering blockhead to rub his eyes and consider what he is about in God's creation—a thing highly desirable at present. I found I could not go on with Cromwell, or with anything else, till I had disburdened my heart somewhat in regard to all that. The look of the world is really quite oppressive to me. Eleven thousand souls in Paisley alone living on three-halfpence a day, and the governors of the land all busy shooting

[1] *Glar*, mud or any moist sticky substance.

partridges and passing corn-laws the while! It is a thing no man with a speaking tongue in his head is entitled to be silent about. My only difficulty is that I have far too *much* to say, and require great address in deciding how to say it.

And to Sterling:—

February 23.

No man was lately busier, and few sicklier, than I now am. Work is not possible for me except in a red-hot element which wastes the life out of me. I have still three weeks of the ugliest labour,[1] and shall be fit for a hospital then. The thing I am upon is a volume to be called 'Past and Present.' It is moral, political, historical, and a most questionable red-hot indignant thing, for my heart is sick to look at the things now going on in this England; and the two millions of men sitting in poor-law Bastilles seem to ask of every English soul, 'Hast thou no word to say for us?' On the whole, I am heartily sorry for myself—sorry that I could not help writing such words, and had none better to write. Whether any *Cromwell*, or what, is in the rear of all this, the Fates know.

'Past and Present' appeared at the beginning of April 1843, and created at once admiration and a storm of anger. It was the first public protest against the 'Sacred Science,' which its chief professors have since discovered to be no science, yet which then was accepted, even by the very clergy, whose teaching it made ridiculous, as being irrefragable as Euclid. The idol is dead now, and may be laughed at with impunity. It was then in its shrine above the altar, and to

[1] Correcting proofs.

doubt was to be damned—by all the newspapers. In 'Chartism' Carlyle had said that the real aim of all modern revolutionary movements was to recover for the free working man the condition which he had lost when he ceased to be a serf. The present book was a fuller insistence upon the same truth. The world's chief glory was the having ended slavery, the having raised the toiler with his hands to the rank and dignity of a free man; and Carlyle had to say that, under the gospel of political economy and free contract, the toiler in question had lost the substance and been fooled with the shadow. Gurth, born thrall of Cedric the Saxon, had his share of the bacon. The serf was, at least, as well cared for by his master as a horse or a cow. Under free contract he remained the slave of nature, which would kill him if he could not feed himself; he was as much as ever forced to work under the whip of hunger; while he was an ownerless vagrant, to be employed at competitive wages, the lowest that would keep him alive, as long as employment was to be had, and to be turned adrift to pine in a workhouse when it was no longer any one's interest to employ him. A cow, a horse, a pig, even a canary bird, was worth a price in the market, was worth feeding and preserving. The free labourer, except at such times as there happened to be a demand for him, was worth nothing. The rich, while this gospel was believed in, might grow richer; but the poor must remain poor always, without hope for themselves, without prospect for their children, more truly slaves, in spite of their freedom, and even in consequence of their freedom, in a country so densely peopled as England, than the

Carolina *Nigger*. The picture was set out with the irony of which Carlyle was so unrivalled a master, with the indignation of which irony is the *art*.

With the existing state of things the book begins; with the existing state of things, and the only possible remedies for it, the book ends; in the middle stands in contrast the ancient English life under the early Plantagenet kings, before freedom in the modern sense had begun to exist; and the picture of St. Edmund's Abbey and its monks, which is thus drawn, is without a rival in modern literature. As to the relative merits of that age and ours there will be different opinions. We know so well where the collar galls our own necks, that we think anyone better off whose shoulder does not suffer at that particular point. Nor did Carlyle insist on drawing comparisons, being content to describe real flesh-and-blood human beings as they were then, and as they are now, and to leave us to our own reflections.

On the whole, perhaps we shall agree with what Lockhart answered, when Carlyle sent his book to him. Lockhart said he could accept none of his friend's inferences, except one, that 'we were all wrong, and were all like to be damned;' but that 'it was a book such as no other man could do, or dream of doing; that it had made him conscious of life and feeling as he had never been before; and that, finally, he wished Carlyle would write something more about the middle ages, write some romance, if he liked. He had more power of putting life into the dry bones than anyone but Scott; and, as nothing could be less like Scott's manner of doing it than Carlyle's, there could be no suspicion of imitation.'

But it is unnecessary for me to review or criticise further a work which has been read so universally, and as to which no two persons are likely entirely to think alike. I shall endeavour rather at this point to describe something of the effect which Carlyle was producing among his contemporaries. 'Past and Present' completes the cycle of writings which were in his first style, and by which he most influenced the thought of his time. He was a Bedouin, as he said of himself, a rough child of the desert. His hand had been against every man, and every man's hand against him. He had offended men of all political parties, and every professor of a recognised form of religion. He had offended Tories by his Radicalism, and Radicals by his scorn of their formulas. He had offended High Churchmen by his Protestantism, and Low Churchmen by his evident unorthodoxy. No sect or following could claim him as belonging to them; if they did, some rough utterance would soon undeceive them. Yet all had acknowledged that here was a man of extraordinary intellectual gifts and of inflexible veracity. If his style was anomalous, it was brilliant. No such humourist had been known in England since Swift; and the humour, while as searching as the great Dean's, was infinitely more genial. Those who were most angry with Carlyle could not deny that much that he said was true. In spite of political economy, all had to admit there was such a thing as justice; that it was the duty of men to abstain from lying a great deal more than they did. 'A new thinker,' in Emerson's phrase, 'had been let loose upon the planet;' the representatives of the Religiones Licitæ, the conven-

tional varieties of permitted practice and speculation, found themselves encountered by a novel element which would assimilate with none of them, which disturbed all their digestions, yet which they equally could not ignore.

This on the surface. But there were circumstances in the time which made Carlyle's mode of thought exceptionally interesting, to young men especially whose convictions were unformed and whose line of life was yet undetermined for them. It was an era of new ideas, of swift if silent spiritual revolution. Reform in Parliament was the symbol of a general hope for the introduction of a new and better order of things. The Church had broken away from her old anchorage. The squire parsons, with their sleepy services, were to serve no longer. Among the middle classes there was the Evangelical revival. The Catholic revival at Oxford had convulsed the University, and had set half the educated men and women in England speculating on the authority of the priesthood, and the essential meaning of Christianity. All were agreed to have done with compromise and conventionalities. Again the critical and inquiring spirit which had been checked by the French Revolution had awakened from the sleep of half a century. Physical science, now that it was creating railroads, bridging the Atlantic with steamships, and giving proof of capacity which could no longer be sneered at, was forming a philosophy of the earth and its inhabitants, agitating and inconvenient to orthodoxy, yet difficult to deal with. Benthamism was taking possession of dominions which religion had claimed hitherto as its own, was interpreting morality

in a way of its own, and directing political action. Modern history, modern languages and literature, with which Englishmen hitherto had been contented to have the slightest acquaintance, were pushing their way into school and college and private families, forcing us into contact with opinions as to the most serious subjects entirely different from our own. We were told to inquire; but to inquire like Des Cartes with a preconceived resolution that the orthodox conclusion must come out true—an excellent rule for those who can follow it, which all unhappily cannot do. To those who inquired with open minds it appeared that things which good and learned men were doubting about must be themselves doubtful. Thus all round us, the intellectual lightships had broken from their moorings, and it was then a new and trying experience. The present generation which has grown up in an open spiritual ocean, which has got used to it and has learned to swim for itself, will never know what it was to find the lights all drifting, the compasses all awry, and nothing left to steer by except the stars.

In this condition the best and bravest of my own contemporaries determined to have done with insincerity, to find ground under their feet, to let the uncertain remain uncertain, but to learn how much and what we could honestly regard as true, and believe that and live by it. Tennyson became the voice of this feeling in poetry; Carlyle in what was called prose, though prose it was not, but something by itself, with a form and melody of its own. Tennyson's poems, the group of poems which closed with 'In Memoriam,' became to many of us what the 'Christian Year' was

to orthodox Churchmen. We read them, and they became part of our minds, the expression in exquisite language of the feelings which were working in ourselves. Carlyle stood beside him as a prophet and teacher; and to the young, the generous, to everyone who took life seriously, who wished to make an honourable use of it, and could not be content with sitting down and making money, his words were like the morning reveille. The middle-aged and experienced who have outgrown their enthusiasm, who have learnt what a real power money is, and how inconvenient the absence of it, may forego a higher creed; may believe without much difficulty that utilitarianism is the only basis of morals; that mind is a product of organised matter; that our wisest course is to make ourselves comfortable in this world, whatever may become of the next. Others of nobler nature who would care little for their comforts, may come at last, after long reflection on this world, to the sad conclusion that nothing can be known about it; that the external powers, whatever they may be, are indifferent to human action or human welfare.

> Κάτθαν' ὁμῶς ὅ τ' ἀεργὸς ἀνὴρ ὅ τε πολλὰ ἐοργώς
> Ἐν δὲ ἰῇ τιμῇ ἠμὲν κακὸς ἠδὲ καὶ ἐσθλός.[1]

To such an opinion some men, and those not the worst, may be driven after weary observation of life. But the young will never believe it; or, if they do, they have been young only in name. Young men

[1] 'There is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool. . . . How dieth the wise man? as the fool.'—*Ecclesiastes*, ii. 16.

have a conscience, in which they recognise the voice of God in their hearts. They have hope. They have love and admiration for generous and noble actions, which tell them that there is more in this world than material things which they can see and handle. They have an intellect, and they cannot conceive that it was given to them by a force which had none of its own. Amidst the controversies, the arguments, the doubts, the crowding uncertainties of forty years ago, Carlyle's voice was to the young generation of Englishmen like the sound of 'five hundred trumpets' in their ears, as Elizabeth's ambassador Randolph said of John Knox. They had been taught to believe in a living God. Alas! it had seemed as if the *life* might be in other moods and tenses, but not in the present indicative. They heard of what He had done in the past, of what He would do in the future, of what it was wished that He might do, of what we were to pray to Him that He would do. Carlyle was the first to make us see His actual and active presence *now* in this working world, not in rhetoric and fine sentiments, not in problematic miracles at Lourdes or La Salette, but in clear letters of fire which all might read, written over the entire surface of human experience. To him God's existence was not an arguable probability, a fact dependent for its certainty on Church authority, or on Apostolic succession, or on so-called histories which might possibly prove to be no more than legends; but an awful reality to which the fates of nations, the fate of each individual man, bore perpetual witness. Here and only here lay the sanction and the meaning of the word *duty*. We were to do our work, not because it

would prove expedient and we should be rewarded for doing it, but because we were bound to do it by our Master's orders. We were to be just and true, because God abhorred wrong and hated lies, and because an account of our deeds and words was literally demanded and exacted from us. And the lesson came from one who seemed 'to speak with authority and not as the Scribes,' as if what he said was absolute certainty beyond question or cavil.

Religious teachers, indeed, had said the same thing, but they had so stifled the practical bearing of their creed under their doctrines and traditions, that honest men had found a difficulty in listening to them. In Carlyle's writings dogma and tradition had melted like a mist, and the awful central fact burnt clear once more in the midst of heaven. Nor could anyone doubt Carlyle's power, or Carlyle's sincerity. He was no founder of a sect bent on glorifying his own personality. He was no spiritual janissary maintaining a cause which he was paid to defend. He was simply a man of high original genius and boundless acquirements, speaking out with his whole heart the convictions at which he had himself arrived in the disinterested search after truth. If we asked who he was, we heard that his character was like his teaching; that he was a peasant's son, brought up in poverty, and was now leading a pure, simple life in a small house in London, seeking no promotion for himself, and content with the wages of an artisan.

I am speaking chiefly of the effect of Carlyle in the circles in which I was myself moving. To others he was recommended by his bold attitude on the tradi-

tionary formulas, the defenders of which, though they could no longer use stake or gibbet, yet could still ruin their antagonists' fortunes and command them to submit or starve. Mere negations, whether of Voltaire or Hume or David Strauss, or whoever it might be, he valued little. To him it was a small thing comparatively to know that this or that theory of things was false. The important matter was not to know what was untrue, but what was true. He never put lance in rest simply for unorthodoxy. False as the priestly mummeries at Bruges might be, he could not wish them away to make room for materialism which was falser than they. Yet he had not concealed that he had small faith in bishops, small faith in verbal inspirations or articles of religion, small concern for the baptismal or other controversies then convulsing the Church of England; and such side cuts and slashes were welcome to the Theological Liberals, who found him so far on their side.

The Radicals, again, might resent his want of reverence for liberty, for political economy, and such like; but he could denounce corn-laws and game-preserving aristocrats with a scorn which the most eloquent of them might envy. In the practical objects at which he was aiming, he was more Radical than they were. They feared him, but they found him useful.

There were others again who were attracted by the quality which Jeffrey so much deprecated. That he was so 'dreadfully in earnest,' that he could not sit down quietly and enjoy himself 'without a theory of the universe in which he could believe,' was not an offence, but a recommendation. Some people cannot

help being in earnest, cannot help requiring a real belief, if life is not to become intolerable to them. Add to this the novelty of Carlyle's mode of speech, his singularly original humour and imagery; add also the impressiveness of his personal presence, as reported by those who had been privileged to see him, and we have an explanation of the universal curiosity which began to be felt about the Prophet of Cheyne Row, and the fascination which he exercised over a certain class of minds in days of the Melbourne Ministry and the agitation over the 'Tracts for the Times.'

I, for one (if I may so far speak of myself), was saved by Carlyle's writings from Positivism, or Romanism, or Atheism, or any other of the creeds or no creeds which in those years were whirling us about in Oxford like leaves in an autumn storm. The controversies of the place had unsettled the faith which we had inherited. The alternatives were being thrust upon us of believing nothing, or believing everything which superstition, disguised as Church authority, had been pleased to impose; or, as a third course, and a worse one, of acquiescing, for worldly convenience, in the established order of things, which had been made intellectually incredible. Carlyle taught me a creed which I could then accept as really true; which I have held ever since, with increasing confidence, as the interpretation of my existence and the guide of my conduct, so far as I have been able to act up to it. Then and always I looked, and have looked, to him as my master. In a long personal intimacy of over thirty years, I learnt to reverence the man as profoundly

as I honoured the teacher . . . . But of this I need say no more, and can now go on with the story.

John Carlyle was in Cheyne Row when 'Past and Present' came out, and was a stay and comfort to his brother in the lassitude which always followed the publication of a book. He had left the Duke of Buccleuch. Lady Clare had wished him to go back with her to Italy, but for this he had no inclination. An opening had presented itself in London. Lord Jeffrey had recommended him to Lady Holland as physician in attendance, and that distinguished lady had been favourably inclined. But Carlyle, when John consulted him, considered 'that she was a wretched, unreasonable, tyrannous old creature,' of whom it would be wise for John to steer clear. As a guest at Chelsea he was welcome always, both to his brother and his sister-in-law: good-humoured, genial, always a sunny presence in a house where sunshine was needed. The book sold fast. On April 28, 1843, Carlyle wrote to his brother James, at Scotsbrig:—

People seem to get themselves considerably struck by it, and 'look two ways for Sunday,' which is a very proper result for them; but, indeed, I for one care but little what becomes of them with it. That is *their* outlook now, not mine.

In May John left for Scotland, leaving regrets behind him.

I was very sad about your going (Carlyle said); I was weak and in bad spirits at any rate. As I saw you roll off, it was an emblem to me of all the partings, bodily and others, men have in this world, summed up at last by the grand

parting which awaits us all—*which*, if it be God's will, may perhaps prove but a *meeting* under happier omens.

The reviewers were all at work on 'Past and Present,' 'wondering, admiring, blaming—chiefly the last.'

Clitter clatter (he said of it in his Journal) *hat Nichts zu bedeuten*—except, indeed, a few pages from Emerson in his 'Dial,' which really contain a eulogy of a magnificent sort. A word from F. Maurice in defence of me from some Church of England reviewer is also gratifying. One knows not whether even such things are a benefit—are not a new peril and bewilderment.

And elsewhere—

I believe it must have gone into the heart of one and the other in these times. It has been to me a considerable relief to see it fairly out of me ; and I look at the disastrous condition of England with much more patience for the present, my conscience no longer reproaching me with any duty that I could do and was neglecting to do. That book always stood between me and Cromwell, and now that has fledged itself and flown off.

'Cromwell,' however, was still not immediately executable. Tired as he was with the efforts of the winter, he was less than ever able to face the London season, especially as increasing popularity increased people's eagerness to see him. An admirer—a Mr. Redwood, a solicitor—living at Llandough, a few miles from Cardiff, had long humbly desired that Carlyle would pay him a visit. An invitation coming at the same time from Bishop Thirlwall, at St. David's, which

could be fitted in with the other, he decided to lay his work by for the present, and make acquaintance with new friends and a new part of the country. Mr. Redwood, who had no literary pretensions, engaged that he should not be made a show of, promised perfect quiet, sea-bathing, a horse if he wished to ride, and the absence of all society, except of himself and his old mother. These temptations were sufficient. On July 3 he left London by train from Paddington to Bristol. A day or two were to be given to acquaintances at Clifton, and thence he was to proceed by a Cardiff steamer. All was strange to him. He had never before been in the South or West of England; and his impressions, coming fresh, formed themselves into pictures, which he threw down in his letters to his wife. Here is Bath, as seen from the window of the railway carriage—rapidly observed, yet with what curious minuteness:—

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Clifton: July 4, 1843.

Bath, built of white stone in trim streets, enclosed amid gnarled, beautifully green, and feathered hills, looked altogether princely after those poor brick towns, like an ancient decayed prince—for it was smoke-soiled, dingy, and lonely-looking—yet in the chimney-pots and gables of a certain polite fantasticality, and all ranked in straight, short streets, which ran in every direction on every variety of level, as if they had been all marching and drilling in that hollow, rough place, each in the road that suited him best. There was something in all this that reminded one of Beau Nash and Smollett's Lady of Quality. My Cockney tourist lady (companion in compartment) pronounced it to be a city built of stone, and of considerable extent—facts both.

The house in Cheyne Row was cleaned and painted during his absence, his wife superintending. On such occasions he was himself better out of the way. Her letters may be referred to occasionally by the side of Carlyle's reports of his own doings.[1]

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Clifton: July 6, 1843.

My Bairn,—I have been at Chepstow in all kinds of weather—in rain, in glowing heat, and then home through the heart of thunderstorms. I am totally wearied, and have just got up to my sleeping-place, which seems tolerably quiet. I must not spend above a minute or two in writing. Take my kind good-night therefore, dear Goody, and thanks for the punctual, most welcome dispatch which I found lying on my table on returning to-day. You are very good—write always; except by your letters, I am at present disunited from all the earth.

Later:—

Chepstow is beautiful. The rocks of the Avon at Clifton, on the road thither by steam, excel all things I have seen. Even I, the most determined anti-viewhunter, find them worthy of a word. I have passed the day, perhaps not ill, though in laborious idleness. Who knows? Yesternight we had a soirée at Mr. Hare's; one or two intelligent persons—Dr. Symons, a hectic clergyman; a Mr. Fripps (I think), very deep in business; all decided Carlylians. *Ach Gott!* There was also a tremendous artist, fiddler, and piano-player; and certain pretty young women sate speechless. I

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 194, &c.

will to sleep, I will to sleep! The scoundrel umbrella vendor![1] He is the first below Darwin's entry, on the same side. Send the *Stimabile*[2] in his brougham to *thunder* eight-ninths of the wretched tailor-life out of him. Adieu, and a thousand good-nights.

Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

Llandough, Cowbridge: Thursday, July 7, 1843.

Dearest,—Your precious little billet came to me at breakfast. I got down in good time to my Cardiff steamer; a brisk breezy morning, promising well; and again, after endless ringing of bells and loading of hampers and bullying and jumbling, we got off down the muddy Avon once more. I passed a most silent day—remembrances of all kinds—and these my only occupation. On the Somersetshire shore we passed a bathing establishment—hapless mothers of families sitting on folding-stools by the beach of muddy tide streams. It is a solitary sea, the Severn one. We passed near only one ship, and in that there lay a cabin-boy sound asleep amidst ropes, and a black-visaged sailor had raised his shock head, only half awake, through the hatches to see what we were. They lay there waiting for a wind. I smoked two cigars and a half. I hummed all manner of tunes—sang even portions of Psalms in a humming tone for my own behoof, reclining on my elbow; and so the day wore on, and at three o'clock we got into Cardiff dock, and I, sharp on the outlook, descried the good Redwood waiting there. He had a *tub-gig;* a most indescribable, thin-bodied, semi-articulate, but altogether helpful kind of a factotum manservant, who stepped on board for my luggage; and so, in few minutes, after giving a

[1] Carlyle had bought an umbrella for his wife, which was to have been sent home, and was not.

[2] John Sterling's father. *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 36.

glance at Cardiff Castle and buying a few cigars, we got eagerly to the road, and not long after five had done our twelve miles and were safe home. It was the beautifullest day; a green, pleasant country, full of shrubby knolls and white thatched cottages; altogether a very reasonable drive. Unexpectedly, in a totally solitary spot, I was bidden dismount; and, looking to the right, saw close by the Redwood mansion—a house about the capacity of Craigenputtock, though in Welsh style, all thin shaven, covered with roses, hedged off from the parish road by invisible fences and a patch of very pretty lawn. The old lady, an innocent native old Quakeress, received me with much simplicity, asked for you, &c. Our dinner, which she had carefully cooked and kept hot for an hour and a half, consisted of—veal.[1] Nay, I heard of a veal pie for future use. I suppose they have killed a fatted calf for me, knowing my tastes! There was good ham and a dish of good boiled peas, and a pudding. I did very well, and we have been to *walk* since; and the place, on the whole, is the loneliest and the most *silent* in all the earth, and I think I shall learn to do very well. Adieu, adieu! Sleep well and dream of me.

T. C.

Friday morning, 7.30 A.M.

Being on my feet again too early, I will add a word till there be some likeness of breakfast, or, at lowest, of *shaving*. All is still here as in a hermitage of La Trappe. But one dirty little yelp of a dog was sufficient to awaken me a while ago. A *messin* is as good as a lion!

My Bishop is some sixty miles inland. I know not whether I shall get to him, nor, indeed, what my capabilities yet are. Oh dear! I wish I was near thee, with thy hot coffee-pot,

[1] Carlyle could not digest veal.

at this moment; but I would not stay there when I was so. I will end, and go shave at present. Has that accursed chimæra of a Cockney not sent the umbrella yet? I could see him trailed thrice through the Thames for his scoundrel conduct. No man knows what breaking his word will do for the general injury. Adieu—a thousand blessings!

T. C.

Almost a fortnight was given to Llandough. His friends were all kindness and attention, and their efforts were gratefully appreciated; but the truth must be told—Carlyle required more than simple, quiet people had to give him. He was bored. He reproached himself, but he could not help it. Mr. Redwood was engaged all day in his office at Cowbridge. His guest was left mainly to himself—to ride about the neighbourhood, to bathe, to lie under the trees on the lawn and smoke, precisely what he had fancied that he had desired. 'All was totally somnolent, not ill fitted for a man that had come out of London to see if he could sleep.' He amused himself tolerably with his wife's letters and with Tieck's 'Vittoria Accorombona,' which she had provided him with, and had begged him to read. He could not approve, however, of this singular book: 'a dreadful piece of work on Tieck's part,' he called it. But occasionally his poor host, to show his respect, absented himself from his own work to do the honours of the country, and Carlyle required all his self-command not to be uncivil.

I have been at St. Donat's (he writes, July 11 and 12). I have just got home through rain and precipitous, rough roads, at a gallop which has jumbled me all to pieces. Devil

take all 'days' of that sort! I had just got your letter when I went away. I went happy, I return *mee-serable*—fly up into my sooty 'study,' to be at least alone for a while. How happy I was over 'Quarterly Review,' peace, silence, and my Goody's letter!

Yesterday, with a rational exertion of ill-nature, I briefly declined going for an Arcadian ramble to the coast all day; or, indeed, going anywhither, indicating that I preferred the green grass, sunshine, and solitude among the trees and winds. The good R. in an instant cheerfully surrendered, cheerfully went off to his attorney's office, and left me totally alone till dinner. I have not for long had so peaceable a day. The old black cobweb coat was warm enough for the temperature. I lay upon the grass on the brae-side, under shadow if I liked; smoked my pipe and looked out upon the waving woods, and felt their great deep melancholy sough a real blessing to me.

'Accorombona' is far the pleasantest thing I have yet fallen in with since I left you: a very gorgeous composition, but too showy in diamonds—Bristol diamonds—tinsel, and the precious metals, for my taste. One finds it to be untrue, almost as an opera; yet much is true, genial, warm, and very grand. Vittoria herself is about the best of all opera heroines—a right divine stage goddess. Bracciano, too, is clearly her mate, as you say; yet I could not but abhor that murder he did of the poor, frivolous, trembling creature—it is detestable! The sublime Song of Solomon passages did also somewhat transcend me. In fact, it is a grand thing; but Bristol diamond, not a little of it. A thousand thanks to Tieck and the Coadjutor for such a gift in these latitudes. Alas! this morning I am reduced to 'Lyell's Geology,' a twaddling, circumfused, ill-writing man. I seem to hear his uninspired voice all along, and see the clear

leaden twinkle of his small bead eyes. However, I will persist a little.

July 13.

This day has been as close, dim, and sultry as a day need be : thunder rumbling on all sides of the horizon ever since morning. I have read several articles in the 'Quarterly Review,' kept aloof from Lyell hitherto, declined to ride, walked out a little way—in short, sauntered in the idlest manner. . . . I have written to Thirlwall that I leave this on Monday. A coach goes through Cowbridge about noon. Some sixty miles I believe it is to Carmarthen. How long I may stay with Thirlwall is not perfectly clear. Two days was the time I talked of, but, if all prospered exceedingly, it might extend to three. I shall get no rest in any of these places, and it may as well be in a *plenum* as in a vacuum. . . . In Llandough, close at hand here, over the knoll-top, I saw certain of the population in the street as I passed along : little flabby figures, brown as a berry ; fat, squat, wide-flowing ; their clothes, of almost *no* colour (such is the prevalence of time and poverty), hung round them as if 'thrown on with a pitchfork'—very noteworthy little fellows (of both sexes) indeed. They saluted kindly as I passed. An old Squire something lives in Llandough Castle close at hand, a little behind the village. Poor fellow ! the grave of his old wife is the newest in Llandough Churchyard and he sits solitary, R. says, and 'scolds his servants, being a proud man.'

The 14th of July was Mrs. Carlyle's birthday. He never forgot it after her mother died, and always provided some pretty present for her. He enclosed in this letter an ornament of some kind, to be ready for the day, which, 'as the umbrella went aback,' he required her 'to accept with all resignation.'

July 15.

Yesterday passed as the brightest, beautifullest day in the whole year might do in these circumstances. I had an excellent four hours till two o'clock, then an excellent solitary gallop to the solitary seashore, a dip in the eternal element there, and gallop back again. The world was all bright as a jewel set in polished silver and sunshine, the sky so purified by the past day's thunder. The little hamlet of Aberddaw, a poor grey *clachan*, crouched under the shelter of a kind of knoll, the half of which was eaten sheer off by the sea. 'Poor Aberddaw!' I said to myself, 'thou sittest there, ill enough bested—God help thee!' The bits of Welsh women, with their cuddies, lugging small merchandise about, a very scrubby kind of figures, seemed highly praiseworthy—humanly pitiable to me. The wood is so beautiful when you see it from the knoll-tops—soft, green, yet shaggy and bushy—and sunshine kisses all things; and the upper moors themselves—dull, blunt, hilly regions—look sapphire in the distance. At my return to dinner Redwood produced, instead of port, a bottle of excellent claret, and said we must drink Mrs. Carlyle's health, as it was her birthday! This fact he had gathered from seeing me purchase the bit of riband for a band for the said Mrs. C. Well, the feat accordingly was done; and even the ancient Quaker mother had her glass filled, and wished 'many happy years to Jane Carlyle,' for which I duly returned thanks. The day had no other public event in it. R. made me sit with him till we *finished* the bottle, and the affair did me no harm at all, rather good.

My malison on this glazed paper, on this detestable *leather* pen! The world gets even madder with its choppings and changings and never-ending innovations, *not* for the better. My collars, too, are all on a new principle. Oh for one hour of Dr. Francia! But here comes our great,

stalking maid, an immensely tall woman: 'The 'oss is out, sir.' I must instantly be off. Adieu, with my heart's blessing!

T. CARLYLE.

In relation to this last paragraph, it is my duty to say that Carlyle would have invoked Dr. Francia on a wrong occasion; for the glazed paper in question is now, after forty years, in perfect condition, not needing any *malison;* and the *leather* pen must have been good, too; for the handwriting—even for Carlyle, who at this time wrote most beautifully—is exceptionally excellent.

Llandough: July 16.

Yet a few last words before quitting this place. I have had, as usual, a divine forenoon, lying under shady trees in the most exquisite summer atmosphere; and then a most *laborious* afternoon—bathing, galloping, dining, talking, till now, when I ought to proceed to pack and arrange, if I did not prefer scribbling to Goody still a word or two. . . . To-morrow at noon I shall have to be on the roof of the mail at Cowbridge: a day of hot travel. I shall certainly not again be lodged so quietly anywhere. There will be rapid spiritual conversation in the Bishop's, and no green tree with book and tobacco to lodge under.

One must take the good and the evil. I find this Redwood a really excellent man; honest, true to the heart, I should think, with a proud and pure character hidden under his simplicity and timidity. He has been entirely hospitable to me, is sorry that I should go, speculates on my coming back, &c., as a proximate event. The old mother, too, is very venerable to me. Poor old woman! with her 'Yearly Monitor,' with her suet dumplings, and all her innocent household gods.

Occasional spurts of complaint over dulness lie scattered in these Llandough letters; but Carlyle knew good people when he saw them. The Redwoods had left him to himself with unobtrusive kindliness. They had not shown him off to their acquaintances. They had thought only what they could do for the comfort of an honoured guest—a mode of treatment very different from what he had sometimes experienced. 'They are a terrible set of fellows,' he said, 'those open-mouthed wondering gawpies, who lodge you for the sake of looking at you: that is horrible.' It was not, however, with alarm on this score that he entered on his next visiting adventure. He would have preferred certainly that such a man as Thirlwall should not have stooped to be made a bishop of, but he claimed no right to judge a man who was evidently of superior quality. How far he actually knew Thirlwall's opinions about religion I cannot say. At all events, he thought he knew them. Thirlwall had sought Carlyle's acquaintance, and had voluntarily conversed with him on serious subjects. Carlyle was looking forward now with curiosity to see how a man who, as he believed, thought much as he did himself, was wearing his anomalous dignities. The reader will, perhaps, be curious also.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Abergwili, Carmarthen: July 18, 1843.

I have been in many 'new positions,' but this of finding myself in a bishop's palace, so called, and close by the chapel founded by old scarecrow *Laud* of famous memory,

is one of the newest. Expect no connected account of the thing, nor of anything whatever to-day. I have not yet learnt the *airts* of the place in the least, and it is a morning of pouring rain, and in an hour (at noon) the brave Bishop, be the weather what it may, decides on riding with me 'four hours and a half' through the wildest scenery of the country, that *it* may not suffer by the tempestuous nature of the elements. The post will be gone before I return: take one word, therefore, to assure thee that I am alive, comparatively speaking *well*, and that I think of thee here—here very especially, where all is so foreign to me. Heavens! do but think: I was awoke before seven o'clock, after a short sleep, by a lackey coming in in haste to indicate that I must come and say my prayers in Laud's Chapel of St. John. I did go, accordingly, and looked at it and at myself with wonder and amazement.

Yesterday, at noon, I got handsomely away from Llandough. The good old dame desired me: 'Thou please to give my regards to Mrs. Carlyle.' I was taken in the 'tub' to Cowbridge, and then the mail came up, full all but one inside seat. I had to take that seat, such as it was, the rather as it turned out there was to be a vacancy on the roof in some seventeen miles further. It was very hot and disagreeable inside; a huge grazier fast asleep, a detestable-looking parson with yellow skin and jet-black tattery wig, and an old burgher of the town of Neath, very talkative, very innocent. To this latter I chiefly attached myself. Neath at last came, the end of the seventeen miles, and I got out and had a cigar, and saw undeniably clear around me the face of heaven and earth—an earth very tolerable, sandstone coal country, green sharp hills with wood enough, green fields ill ploughed and cultivated, houses plastered with whitewash, ridiculous Welsh bodies, all the women of them now with men's hats, a great proportion of them looking

very hungry and ragged. Swansea, enveloped in thick poisonous copper fumes, and stretching out in winged desolation (for the copper forges are of the last degree of squalor; low huts, with forests of chimneys, and great mountains of red dross, which never changes into soil), is a very strange and very ugly place. We dined there, and then bowled along into the hills of the interior—no great shakes of *hills;* but as the road goes over the top of them all, it makes them somewhat impressive. About seven in the evening we plunged down by a steep winding way into the 'Valley of the Towy,' a dim enough looking valley; for there was a windy Scotch mist by that time, with a river of some breadth and of muddy colour running through it; and a little farther up, a strange bleared mountain city, hanging in a disconsolate manner on the farther bank and steep declivity. Carmarthen at last! No *bishop's* carriage was waiting for me—ah, no! I hired a gig and flunkey, for which, to this distance of *two miles*, I paid five shillings, and one and sixpence (to driver)—six shillings and sixpence in all. There is a way of doing business!

Abergwili is a village of pitiful dimensions, all daubed as usual with whitewash and yellow ochre. It is built, however, like a common village, on both sides of the public road. At the farther end of it, you come to solemn, large, closed gates of wood; on your shout they open, and you enter upon a considerable glebe-land *pleasance*, with the usual trees, turf walks, peacocks, &c., and see at fifty yards distance a long, irregular, perhaps *cross*-shaped, edifice, the porch of it surmounted by a stone mitre. *Ach Gott!*

I was warmly welcomed, though my Bishop did seem a little uneasy too; but how could he help it? I got with much pomp an extremely bad and late dish of tea, then plenty of good talk till midnight, and a room at the farther wing of the house, still as the heart of wildernesses, where,

after some smoking, &c., I did at last sink into sleep, till awakened as aforesaid.

We have had an excellent cup of tea to breakfast, and I feel ready for a bit of the world's fortune once more. My Bishop, I can discern, is a right solid honest-hearted man, full of knowledge and sense, excessively *delicate* withal, and, in spite of his positive temper, almost *timid*. No wonder he is a little embarrassed with me, till he feel gradually that I have not come here to eat him, or make scenes in his still house! But we are getting, or as good as got, out of that, and shall for our brief time do admirably well. Here is medicine for the soul, if the body fare worse for such sumptuosities, precisely the converse of Llandough. It is wholly an element of rigid, decently elegant *forms* that we live in. Very wholesome for the like of me to dip for a day or two into that, is it not? For the rest, I have got two other novels of Tieck, of which the admiring Bishop possesses a whole stock.

Oh, I do hope thou wilt write to me this day! I feel as if a little friendly speech, even about 'Time and Space,' with my poor Goody, would be highly consolatory to me. To-night I shall sleep better. To-morrow I shall be more at home; and the next day—there is nothing yet settled about the next day.

Coaches, it seems, and some kind of straggling chances and possibilities of conveyance, do exist till one gets within wind of Liverpool. I think of persisting by this route. The mountains lie all upon it which one is bound to 'see.' Oh, my dear! how much richer am I than many a man with 3,000*l.* a year, if I but knew it! What is the worth of Goody herself, thinkest thou? God bless thee! T. CARLYLE.

Abergwili: July 19.

I am very conscientious in writing to you. Here, for example, I have missed viewing the city of Carmarthen for

your sake, having, by candid computation when I got hither to my own room, found that I could not write to you if I went. What a favour! you will say. Yes, you gipsy, and a favour to myself too. Your letter of last night was a real consolation to me. I have lost my *liberty:* I have lost my sleep: I am in a baddish way here; but it will soon be done. From *vacuum* I have got into *plenum* with a vengeance. What with chapel-duty, riding to see views, talking with the brave Bishop, late dining, limited tobacco, and flunkeys awaking you at seven in the morning (the very terror of whom awakens you at six), it is a business one needs to be trained to, and that is not worth while at present.

We sallied out yesterday in the midst of thick rain on two horses. Mine was the highest I ever rode, bigger fully than Darwin's cabhorse. We rode for four mortal hours, no trotting permitted, except when I, contrary to all politeness, burst off into a *voluntario*, and then had soon to lie to for my host, who rides somewhat ecclesiastically. What was worse, too, my high horse was in the fiercest humour for riding, and I longed immensely to take the temper out of him. But, no; we plodded away, and saw a circle of views —views very good. Valleys, scrubby or woody hills, old churches, and ragged Welsh characters in torn hats—all very good. But, though the rain abated and finally subsided into mud and soapy dimness, I was glad enough to get home. To-day, again, while the weather is bright, we are to renew the operation at three o'clock. Well, and yet I am very glad I came in by this establishment, even at the expense of sleep. Nothing similar had ever before fallen in my way, and it was worth seeing once. Do but think of a wretched scarecrow face of Laud looking down on us in Laud's own house, that once was, as we sit at meat. And there is much good in all that, I see. A *perfection* of *form* which is not without its value. With the Bishop himself, I, keeping a

strict guard on my mode of utterance, not mode of thinking, get on extremely well. I find him a right solid, simple-hearted, robust man, very strangely *swathed;* on the whole, right good company. And so we fare along in all manner of discourse, and even laugh a good deal together. Could I but sleep !—but, then, I never can. I had, according to the original programme, decided to be off to-morrow morning, but the worthy host insists with such an earnestness that I, by way of handsome finish, shall be obliged to put off till Friday morning, and see two other *sleeps* still before me. Then, however, it is up. I see my route, and am off.

By the maturest calculation, it seems my far best route will be north-eastward, through Brecknockshire and Monmouthshire, to Gloucester, Worcester, Birmingham, and Liverpool. A coach passes here to Gloucester in one day. The rest of it is railway. I am about done with my capacity of visiting for this heat. I shall like about as well to take my ease at my inn. Spending the night at Gloucester, I shall view the city in the morning ; a Cromwellian place that I wanted this long while to see. Then Worcester in like manner, till the railway train come that will take me to Birmingham and Liverpool. That will be best.

I am writing too much—I will end now. What a blessed rustle among these green trees, on that sunny lawn, with woods and fields and hills in the distance! How happy could I be, would all the world except one small cook's assistant *fall asleep* and leave me alone with Tieck's 'Vogelscheuche'! We are in an excellent building ; long galleries, spacious quiet rooms, all softly carpeted, furnished—room enough for the biggest duke. The mitre does not exclude soft carpeting, good *cheer*, or any contrivance for comfort to the outer man. X—— is here ; good-humoured, entirely polite, drinks well, eats well, toadies as far as permitted, turned of forty,

lean and yellow; has boiled big eyes, a neck, head, and nose giving you a notion of a gigantic human snipe. Is not that a beauty? I have had to look into about a thousand books. The good Bishop is simple as a child. We are alone all but the snipe. To-morrow there is talk of a judge dining with us. Hang it! Perhaps that is one of the reasons why I am to be kept here.

Oh Goody, I send thee a hundred kisses. I have much need to be kissed myself by a Goody. Adieu, adieu.

Ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

Abergwili: July 20.

We had our grand dinner last night; a judge named N——, and about twenty advocates; a dreadful explosion of dulness, champagne and *ennui*, which, however, I took little hand in, being empowered by his reverence to go out and smoke whenever I found it dull. N——, first fiddle on this occasion, was a man that I had seen at the Stanleys', or some such place, playing fourth or fifth fiddle. The advocates generally filled me with a kind of shudder. To think that had I once had 200*l*. I should perhaps have been that! One of them named Vaughan pleased me not a little. They all went off soon, and then I had a long questionable bout of prints to front—sound sleep for a few hours, and a lackey to awaken you at half-past six. It is over now, all that lackeyism, thank God! The Bishop received your compliments (did I tell you?) with much modesty and gratitude, mumbled something about *you* being here—how happy, &c. He has been most kind to me. Poor fellow! Think of a solid bishop riding post as we had to do to-day. It was literally altogether very good. Our talk has been extensive, rather interesting occasionally, always worth its kind, or nearly so. Peace be with Abergwili, and may it be a while before I run

across such a mesh of *forms* again, requiring such a curb-bridle on your liberties to observe them rightly! For what we have received the Lord make us thankful. Adieu, dearest, adieu—I wish I were with thee. T. C.

The expression 'strangely swathed' implies that he had found the Bishop not entirely sympathetic; and perhaps he had not remembered sufficiently how beliefs linger honestly in the ablest mind, though the mode of thought be fatally at variance with them.

However this may have been, the visit was over, and Carlyle went his way. His plan was to go first to Gloucester and Worcester to look at the battle-field; afterwards to go to Scotland, through Liverpool, to see his mother; then to make a tour with his brother John in North Wales; and, finally, before returning to London, to examine the ground of Oliver's great fight at Dunbar. He was in good spirits, and his accounts of his adventures are characteristically amusing. He had spoken of taking his ease in his inn. He tried it first at the Bell Inn at Gloucester, which he found to be 'a section of Bedlam.' 'Sounds of harps and stringed instruments, *ruffing* of applausive barristers over table oratory heard at a distance, waiters running about in a distracted state; hapless bagmen either preparing to go off "by mail," or else swallowing punch in the hope to escape their wretchedness by getting drunk.' 'He had felt hap-hap-happy in the morning, and then he was *meeserable*.' Spite of all, he went to bed 'with noble defiance,' and slept sounder than he expected. But 'no gladder sight had he seen on his travels than the omnibus in the morning which was to take him out of the Bell

Inn for all time and all eternity.' 'The dirty scrub of a waiter,' he said, 'grumbled about his allowance, which I reckoned liberal. I added sixpence to it, and produced a bow which I was near rewarding with a kick. . . . Accursed be the race of flunkeys!' The boots complained next. 'As they were never to meet more through all eternity,' the boots was allowed a second sixpence also. The railway train carried him past the hills where 'the Gloucester Puritans saw Essex's signal fires and notice that help was nigh.' The scene of the last battle of the Civil War was to have a closer inspection. 'Worcester,' he writes, 'was three miles off the station westward.'

I rode thither, smoking, by the London road, and was set down at some Crown Inn, vacant of customers, to a most blessed breakfast of coffee and ham and accompaniments, a considerable 'Christian *comfoart*.' I set rapidly out to explore the city. From Severn Bridge I could see the ground of Oliver's battle. It was a most brief survey. A poor labourer whom I consulted 'had heard of such a thing,' wished to God 'we had another Oliver, sir; times is dreadful bad.' I spoke with the poor man awhile; a shrewd, well-conditioned fellow; left a shilling with him, almost the only good deed I did all day. In the railway train I had adventures of a small evil kind; two men to quench who attempted, partly by mistake, to use me ill. They proved quenchable without difficulty; for indeed I myself was in a somewhat sulphurous condition, not handy to quarrel with. One of them, my fellow-passenger in the railway, took it into his head to smile visibly when I laid off my white broadbrim, and suddenly produced out of my pocket my grey Glengarry. He seemed of the mercantile head-clerk species, and had been

tempted to his impropriety by a foolish-looking, pampered young lady in tiger-skin mantle whom he seemed to have charge of. I looked straight into his smiling face and eyes; a look which I suppose inquired of him, 'Miserable ninth part of the fraction of a tailor, art thou sure that thou hast a right to laugh at me?' The smile instantly died into another expression of emotion. When a man is just come out of a section of Bedlam, and has still a long confused journey in bad weather in the second-class train, that is the time for getting himself treated with the respect due to genius.

At Liverpool Carlyle was warmly welcomed by his wife's uncle, in Maryland Street. He found his brother John waiting for him there. They arranged to wait where they were for a day or two, and then to make their expedition into North Wales together before the days began to shorten. While in Liverpool Carlyle encountered a person then much talked of, whose acquaintance Mrs. Carlyle made shortly after in a striking manner in London.[1]

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Liverpool: July 24.

Passing near some Catholic chapel, and noticing a great crowd in a yard there, with flags, white sticks, and brass bands, we stopped our hackney-coachman, stepped forth into the thing, and found it to be Father Mathew distributing the temperance pledge to the lost sheep of the place, thousands strong, of both sexes—a very ragged, lost-looking squadron indeed. Father M. is a broad, solid, most excellent-looking man with grey hair, mild intelligent eyes, massive,

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 220.

rather aquiline nose and countenance. The very face of him attracts you. . . . We saw him go through a whole act of the business, 'do,' as Darwin would say, 'an entire batch of teetotallers.' I almost cried to listen to him, and could not but lift my broadbrim at the end, when he called for God's blessing on the vow these poor wretches had taken. . . . I have seen nothing so religious since I set out on my travels as the squalid scene of this day—nay, nothing properly religious at all; though I have been in Laud's chapel and heard daily with damnable iteration of 'the means of grace and the hope of glory' from that portentous human snipe. Not a bad fellow either, poor devil! But we are in a dreadful mess as to all that; and even a strong Bishop Thirlwall constitutes himself a Macready of Episcopacy as the *best* he can do, and does it uncommonly well; and is 'a strong-minded man, sir,' and a right worthy man in his unfortunate kind. . . . God bless thee, and so ends

Thy unfortunate

T. C.

The North Wales tour was brief. The brothers went in a steamer from Liverpool to Bangor, and thence to Llanberis, again in a 'tub-gig,' or Welsh car. They travelled light, for Carlyle took no baggage with him except a razor, a shaving-brush, a shirt, and a pocket-comb; 'tooth-brush' not mentioned, but we may hope forgotten in the inventory. They slept at Llanberis, and the next day went up Snowdon. The summit was thick in mist. They met two other parties there coming up from the other side of the mountain 'like ghosts of parties escorted by their Charons.' They descended to Beddgelert, and thence drove down to Tremadoc, where they were entertained by a London friend, one of the

Chorleys, who had a house at that place. Carlyle began to feel already that he had had enough of it, to tire of his 'tossings and tumblings,' and to find that he did not 'at the bottom care twopence for all the picturesqueness in the world.' One night sufficed for Tremadoc. They returned thence straight to Liverpool, and were again in Maryland Street on August 1.

Mrs. Carlyle had been suffering from heat and her exertions in house repairs, and her husband thought it possible that he might take a seaside lodging at Formby, at the mouth of the Mersey, where they could remain together for the rest of the summer. Formby had the advantage of being near Seaforth, where the Paulets lived, with whom Mrs. Carlyle had already become intimate. Mr. Paulet was a merchant, a sensible, well-informed, good kind of man. Mrs. Paulet, young, gifted, and beautiful, was one of Carlyle's most enthusiastic admirers. The neighbourhood of such friends as these was an attraction; but the place when examined into was found desolate and shelterless. The experiment of lodgings at Newby had not been successful, so Mrs. Carlyle was left to take care of herself, which she was well able to do, and her husband made off for Scotland by his usual sea route to Annan. Misadventures continued to persecute him on his travels, or rather travelling itself was one persistent misadventure, for he could never allow for the necessities of things. The steamer, to begin with, left Liverpool at three in the morning. When he went on board 'it was chaos, cloudy, dim, bewildered, like a nasty, damp, clammy dream of confusion, dirt, impediment, and general nightmare.' In the morning there was some amendment. He could meditate

on his own condition, and find an idyll in the story of another passenger.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: August 5, 1843.

The voyage, thanks to a bright sunshine all day, was far more tolerable than it promised to be. Nay, in spite as it were of very fate, I snatched some five hours of sleep at various dates. I on the whole fared well enough. My poor native Annandale never looked so impressive to me that I remember: black rain curtains all around—but *there* when I saw it a kind of *bewept* brightness. All seemed so small, remote, eternally foreign; I said to myself, 'There among these poor knolls thy life journeyings commenced, my man! there didst thou begin in this outskirt of creation, and thou hast wandered very far since then—far as Eternity and Hades, so to speak, since then. Nobody was there to receive me. I got a kind of gig at Benson's inn and came hither to kind welcome, to dinner, tea, and sleep all in the lump almost. My determination is to rest here for a space. I feel quite smashed, done up, and pressingly in need to pause and do nothing whatever. I have spread out my things. I sit in the little easternmost room sacred from interruption. I will rest now. My poor mother is very cheery, but very pale, thin, and has evidently been suffering much since I saw her. Jamie goes on in the old cheerfully stoical manner in these worst of times.

I declare I am very sorry for all people. Yesterday was an old, dirty, feckless-looking man, in tattered straw hat, sitting in the steamer; notable to me all day. At night a rugged, hearty kind of old woman came on deck, who proved to be his wife. They had been in America, where all their children, eleven in number, were born; 'but the auld man,

ye see, wadna bide,' though they had sent for him ; and so here he was with his old dame come daundering back again to beggary and the Hawick native soil ! Poor old devil ! I was heartily sorry for him and the sturdy old wife. I honoured her as a true heart of oak, the mainstay of her old man, who grinned intelligence as he saw Scotch land again. Their goods were in certain duddy pokes, and one painted chest of which the woman carried the key. Her sturdy way of undoing the padlock had first attracted my attention to her. Is not life a 'joyous' kind of thing to this old woman ? 'I declare I'se quite shamed,' she said, 'to gang hame sa dirty ; a's dirty, and I could get nothing washed.'

Oh Goody, why do I twaddle to thee about all and sundry in this manner ? Really silence would be preferable, and the saving of a penny stamp.

He lay still for a month at Scotsbrig doing nothing save a little miscellaneous reading, and hiding himself from human sight. These few letters and fragments will serve as a specimen of many written during this period of eclipse.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: August 16, 1843.

I have no appetite for writing, for speaking, or in short doing anything but sitting still as a stone, while that is conceded me——Confound it ! Here are two beggarly people from Ecclefechan come driving in a gig in probable search for me. May the Devil give them luck of it ! I hope Jenny will gulp a lie (door lie) for my sake. I will wait perdu and fling down the pen till I see. No ; Jenny had not the sense to make a white lie for me, and I had to enter. A poor West Indies bilious youth home for his health 'ex-

tremely desirous to see me' (many thanks to him), 'just called with his father.' I have given them whisky and water and sent them on their way. There is no rest for the wicked.

Here it is as hot as Demerara, windless, with a burning sun. I am lazy in addition to all. Lazy as I almost never was. Work, past or future, not to speak of present, is a weariness to me. I sometimes think of Cromwell. Oh heavens! I shall need to be in another mood than now. I must take new measures. This will never do.

The tailor has turned me out two pairs of trousers;[1] has two winter waistcoats and much else in progress. I find nothing wrong but the Dumfries buttons yet, which I have duly execrated and flung aside. Poor hunger-ridden, quack-ridden Dumfries! Wages yesterday at Lockerbie fair 'were lower than any man ever saw them.' A harvestman coming hither for five weeks is to have one sovereign. A weaker individual works through the same period for 15*s.* or 12*s.* 6*d.*, according as he proves. The latter is a shoemaker's apprentice, who has harvest granted to him, to earn his year's apparel. Ruin by sliding scales and other conveyances slides rapidly on all men.

Last afternoon I had a beautiful walk on the Dairland Hills moor. A little walking shakes away my sluggishness. The bare expanse of silent green upland is round me, far off the world of mountains, and the sea all changed to silver. Out of the dusky sunset—for vapours had fallen—the windows of Carlisle city glanced visibly upon me; twenty thousand human bipeds whom I could cover with my hat. On these occasions, unfortunately, I *think* almost nothing. Vague dreams, delusions, idle reminiscences, and confusions are all that occupy me. I am an unprofitable servant.

[1] Carlyle had his clothes made at Ecclefechan, partly for economy, partly because he could not believe in the honesty of London work.

I have taken up with a biography of Ralph Erskine, the first of the *Seceders*. It is absolutely very strange. A long, soft, poke-cheeked face, with busy, anxious black eyes, 'looking as if he could not help it;' and then such a character and form of human existence, conscience living to the fingers-ends of him in a strange, venerable, though highly questionable manner! There have been strange men in this world; and indeed every man is strange enough. This Ralph makes me reflect, 'Whitherward are we now bound? What has become of all that? Is man grown into a kind of brute than can merely spin and make railways?' '*Mir wäre lieber dass ich plötzlich stürbe.*'

Again, a day or two later:—

The reading of Ralph Erskine has given me strange reflections as to the profoundly *enveloped* state in which all sons of Adam live. . . . This poor Ralph, and his formulas casing him all round like the shell of a beetle. What a thing it is! And yet what better have the rest of us made of it? Far worse most of us in our Benthamisms, Jacobinisms, George Sandisms. Man is a born owl. I consider it good, however, that one do not get into the state of a beetle, that one try to keep one's shell open, or at least openable. I mean to persist in endeavouring that.

The lives of all men in all ranks, places, and times have their tragedy, their comedy, their romance in them; and are at once poetical, if there is a man of genius at hand to observe, especially if he have radical fire in him. Human creatures love, hate, have their pride and their passions, do wrong and suffer wrong, wherever they are. Here are two small pictures from peasant life in Annandale, as Carlyle saw it in 1843:—

August 21.

A poor slut of a man, Jamie's next neighbour here, has a farm too dear, deficient stock, arrears of rent, with all manner of sorrowful et cæteras, and hangs of late years continually on the verge of ruin. He is turned of forty—a great, heavy, simple, toilsome lump of nut-brown innocency; has wife and children; an old mother, stone-blind, who 'milks all the cows.' His soul's first care is to raise 100*l.* annually for his landlord to buy port wine or whisky with. According to the *lex terræ* as it at present stands, they can strip him to the skin any time for past arrears, but prefer to let him struggle along, 'doing his best.' At this last rent-day he was nearly out of his wits, Jamie says. The corn he meant to sell was not ripe enough for selling; the bare bent or the inside of a gaol his only other outlook. For ten days he rode and ran, 'sleeping none,' or hardly sleeping. By Jamie's help he did at length get the 50*l.* ready. He paid it duly, got on his horse to come home again, had a stroke of apoplexy by the way, arrived home still sticking to his horse, but unable to speak or walk, and has walked or spoken none since. What a joyous existence his! And that old stone-blind mother! We are very despicable drivellers to make any moan. Oh heavens! can that be the task of an immortal soul, catching apoplexy to provide whisky for —— of ——? *Je me suis dit un jour, cela n'est pas juste.* No, it is not, and by God's help shall not be held so.

August 30.

I must tell you another thing I heard which struck me considerably. You remember a lump of an old woman, half haveral,[1] half genius, called Jenny Fraser. The 'Duke' had decided on high that not an inch of ground should be allowed for a 'non-intrusion' church in that region. No

[1] *Haveral*, a half-witted person.

church shall there or thereabouts be. It is paltry to stop the mouths of men that observe any measure in their complainings—very poor, even if a Duke had made all the land he refuses to concede a few yards of. Well; but old Jenny Fraser possesses about Boatford a patch of ground independent of all persons, just about equal to holding a church and its eavesdrops, and says *she* will give it. Hunter of Merton Mill and agents are at work. Go to Jenny, offer her 10*l.*, 20*l.*; indicate possibilities of perhaps more. Jenny is deaf as whinstone, though poor nearly as Job. She answers always, 'I got it from the Lord, and I will give it to the Lord.' And there, it seems, the Free Kirk, in spite of Duke and Devil, is to be. I had a month's mind to go and give Jenny a sovereign myself; but I remembered two things: first, that she had for some reason or other become a stranger to her former benefactress [Mrs. Carlyle herself ?], and then, secondly, it might have a factious look, better to avoid at that moment; we can do it better afterwards, and I can hear your opinion withal—'Duke *versus* Jenny Fraser!' it is as ridiculous a conjuncture as has happened lately. These poor people, living under their Duke in secret spleen and sham loyalty, are somewhat to be pitied. 'The earth's the Lord's and no the Duke's,' as Charlie Rae said.

This little story is worth preserving as part of the history of the Free Kirk, independently of Carlyle's comments. Jenny Fraser was a true daughter of the Covenanters.

Carlyle's time in the North was running out; he had still to see Dunbar battle-field, and he had arranged his movements that he should see it on Oliver's own 3rd of September, the day of the Dunbar fight, the day of the Worcester fight, and the day of his death. One or two

small duties remained to be discharged first in Dumfriesshire. His wife had asked him to go once more to Thornhill and Templand to see after her mother's old servants, and to visit also the grave in Crawford Churchyard. To Crawford he was willing to go; from Templand he shrank as too painful. In leaving it, he thought that he had bid adieu to the old scenes for ever. Still this and anything he was ready to undertake if it would give her any pleasure. Most tender, most affectionate, were the terms in which he gave his promise to go. He did go. He distributed presents among the old people, who in Mrs. Welsh had lost their best friend. Finally, he went also to the churchyard, seeing Thornhill a second time on the way.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Edinburgh: September 2.

As the mail was to start from Dumfries at six o'clock without pause by the way, I preferred the heavy coach yesterday at nine. It took me by Thornhill, &c. I had not duly calculated on that; and yet who knows but a day of such sad solemnity spent in utter silence, though painful exceedingly, was worth enduring. Nobody knew me. I sate two minutes in Thornhill Street, unsuspected by all men, a kind of ghost among men. The day was windless: the earth all still: grey mist rested on the tops of the green hills, the vacant brown moors: silence as of eternity rested over the world. It was like a journey through the kingdoms of the dead, one Hall of Spirits till I got past Crawford. . . . I was as a spirit in the land of spirits, called land of the living. . . . At Crawford I was on a sacred spot, one of the two *sacredest* in all the world—I was at the grave. I tried

at first to gain as much time on the coach [as was needed.] This being impossible, the good-natured driver offered to wait. In my life I have had no more unearthly moment. Perhaps it was not right, though doubtless you will thank me. At any rate, I could not decide to pass. Oh heavens! and all so silent there, smoothed into the repose of *God's* eternity; and the hills look on it, and the skies, and I thought how blessed *all that* was, beyond the dreary sorrows and agitations of all *this*. Why should I dwell on such a matter? I mean to go and see your brave father's grave, too, and I will speak no word about it—you shall hold it done without my speaking.

This was written from Edinburgh on September 2. The 3rd was to be given to Dunbar, and along with Dunbar was to be combined the pilgrimage to that last solemn spot to which he referred with so fine delicacy. Without staying to see any Edinburgh acquaintance except David Laing, he went on direct to Haddington, where he was to be the guest of his wife's old and dear friends, the Miss Donaldsons of Sunny Bank. The thoughts which he had brought from Crawford attended him still as he came among the scenes of Mrs. Carlyle's childhood, where he and she had first looked in each other's faces.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Haddington: September 4, 1843.

These two days the image of my dear little Jeannie has hovered incessantly about me, waking and sleeping, in a sad yet almost celestial manner, like the spirit, I might say, of a beautiful dream. These were the streets and places where

she ran about, a merry, eager little fairy of a child : and it is all gone away from her now, and she from it : and of all her possessions, poor I am, as it were, all that remains to her. My dearest, while I live, one soul to trust in shall not be wanting. My poor little Jeannie ! How solemn is this *Hall of the Past*, beautiful and mournful ; the miraculous river of existence rolling its grand course here, as elsewhere in the most prophetic places, now even as of old ; godlike, though dark with death.

Carlyle feeling and writing with such exquisite tenderness, and Carlyle a fortnight later when he was in Cheyne Row making a domestic earthquake and driving his wife distracted because a piano sounded too loud in the adjoining house, are beings so different, that it seemed as if his soul was divided, like the Dioscuri, as if one part of it was in heaven, and the other in the place opposite to heaven. But the misery had its origin in the same sensitiveness of nature which was so tremulously alive to soft and delicate emotion. Men of genius have acuter feelings than common men; they are like the wind-harp, which answers to the breath that touches it, now low and sweet, now rising into wild swell or angry scream, as the strings are swept by some passing gust.

The rest of this letter describes the expedition to Dunbar, and is written at a more ordinary pitch. September 3 was a Sunday.

No coaches going to Dunbar on that day, I had to resolve on doing the thing by walking. Before quitting Edinburgh, I had gone to David Laing, and refreshed all my recollections by looking at his books, one of which he even lent me

out hither. Fortified with all studies and other furtherances, I took a stick from the lobby here and set forth about half-past nine; the morning grey and windy, wind straight in my back. To Linton the walk was delightful; the rich autumn country and Sabbath solitude altogether solacing to me. At Linton, a shoal, or rather endless shoals, of ragged Irish reapers made the highway thenceforth too populous for me. Indeed, between Musselburgh and Dunbar they have made all thoroughfares a continued Donnybrook, every variety of ragged savagery and squalor—the finest peasantry in the world. There is not work for a fourth part of them—wages one shilling a day. They seem to subsist on the plunder of turnips and beanfields. They did not beg: only asked me now and then for 'the toime, plaise sur,' seeing I had a watch. It was curious to see at Linton the poor remnant of Highland shearers all lying decently in rows on the green, while the Irish were hovering they knew not whither, without plan, without repose.

At Dunbar I found the battle-ground much more recognisable than any I had yet seen; indeed, altogether what one would call clear. It is at the foot and further eastward along the slope of the hill they call the doun that the Scots stood, Cromwell at Broxmouth (Duke of Roxburghe's place), where he 'saw the sun rise over the sea,' and quoted a certain Psalm. I had the conviction that I stood on the very ground. Having time to spare (for dinner was at six), I surveyed the old Castle, washed my feet in the sea—smoking the while—took an image of Dunbar with me as I could, and then set my face to the wind and the storm, which had by this time risen to a quite tempestuous pitch. No rougher work have I had for a long time, boring through it with my broadbrim, not *perpendicular* to it; face parallel to the highway—that was the only possible method, except sometimes that I set the broadbrim on my breast and walked

bare-headed; the only ill effect of which is that it has filled my hair with sand till the sea-water wash it out again.

Duties all finished, there remained now to get back to Chelsea. The cheapest, and to Carlyle the pleasantest, way was by sea. A day could be given to Edinburgh, two to the Fergusses at Kirkcaldy. Thence he could go to Mr. Erskine and stay at Linlathen till the 15th, when a steamer would sail for Dundee. After the sight of the battle-fields, the 'Cromwell' enterprise seemed no longer impossible. He was longing to be at home and at work; 'at home with Goody and her new house and her old heart.' The boat would be forty-five hours on the way. He would be at Chelsea by the 19th, and 'his long pilgrimage be ended.' He had seen many things in the course of it, but 'nothing half as good as his own Goody.' In the most amiable mood he called on everyone that he knew in Edinburgh —called on his wife's aunts at Morningside, called on Jeffrey at Craigcrook, to whom he was always grateful as his first active friend.

I found him (he says) somewhat in a deteriorated state. The little Duke had lamed his *shin;* sate lean, disconsolate, irritable, talkative, and argumentative as ever, with his foot laid on a stool. Poor old fellow! I talked with him chiefly till two o'clock, and then they drove me off in their carriage.

The days with Erskine in his quiet house at Linlathen were an enjoyment and amusement. Erskine officiating as a country gentleman, as chief commander of a squire's mansion, was a novel spectacle, the most gentle of men and yet obliged to put on the air of

authority, and 'doing it dreadfully ill.' But Carlyle's thoughts were riveted on home. He had been irritable and troublesome before he went away in the summer. He was returning with the sense that in Cheyne Row only was paradise, where he would never be impatient again.

Oh Goody! (he exclaimed in his last letter) I wish I was with thee again. We will go into a room together, and have a little talk about time and space. Thou wilt hardly know me again. I am brown as a berry, face and hands; terribly bilious—sick even, yet with a feeling that there is a good stock of new health in me had I once leave to subside. Courage! in a few hours more it will be done.

CHAPTER XII.

A.D. 1843-4. ÆT. 48-49.

A repaired house—Beginnings of 'Cromwell'—Difficulties—The Edinburgh students—Offer of a professorship—The old mother at Scotsbrig—Lady Harriet Baring—A day at Addiscombe—Birthday present—Death of John Sterling.

ALAS for the infirmity of mortal resolution! Between the fool and the man of genius there is at least this symptom of their common humanity. Carlyle came home with the fixed determination to be amiable and good and make his wife happy. No one who reads his letters to her can doubt of his perfect confidence in her, or of his childlike affection for her. She was the one person in the world besides his mother whose character he completely admired, whose judgment he completely respected, whose happiness he was most anxious to secure; but he came home to drive her immediately distracted, not by unkindness—for unkind he could not be—but through inability to endure with ordinary patience the smallest inconveniences of life. These were times when Carlyle was like a child, and like a very naughty one.

During the three months of his absence the house in Cheyne Row had undergone a 'thorough repair.' This process, which the dirt of London makes necessary every four or five years, is usually undergone in the absence of the owners. Mrs. Carlyle, feeble and out of

health as she was, had remained, to spare her husband expense, through the paint and noise, directing everything herself, and restoring everything to order and cleanliness at a minimum of cost. The walls had been painted or papered, the floors washed, the beds taken to pieces and remade, the injured furniture mended. With her own hands she had newly covered chairs and sofas, and stitched carpets and curtains; while for Carlyle himself she had arranged a library exactly in the form which he had declared before that it was essential to his peace that his own working room should have. For three days he was satisfied, and acknowledged 'a certain admiration.' Unfortunately when at heart he was really most gratified, his acknowledgments were limited; he was shy of showing feeling, and even those who knew him best and understood his ways were often hurt by his apparent indifference. He had admitted that the house had been altered for the better, but on the fourth morning the young lady next door began upon her fatal piano, and then the tempest burst out which Mrs. Carlyle describes with such pathetic humour.[1] First he insisted that he would have a room made for himself on the roof where no sound could enter. When shown how much this would cost, he chose to have his rooms altered below—partitions made or taken down—new fireplaces introduced. Again the house was filled with dust and workmen; saws grating and hammers clattering, and poor Carlyle in the midst of it, 'wringing his hands and tearing his hair at the sight of the uproar which

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 264.

he had raised.' And after all it was not the piano, or very little the piano. It is in ourselves that we are this or that, and the young lady might have played her fingers off, and he would never have heard her, had his work once been set going, and he absorbed in it. But go it would not, except fitfully and unsatisfactorily; his materials were all accumulated; he had seen all that he needed to see, yet his task still seemed impossible. The tumult in the house was appeased: another writing-room was arranged; the unfortunate young lady was brought to silence. 'Past and Present' was done and out of the way. The dinner-hour was changed to the middle of the day to improve the biliary condition. No result came. He walked about the streets to distract himself. His mind wandered to other subjects as one thing or another suggested itself.

Journal.

Chelsea: October 10, 1843.—Began yesterday to dine at 2.30. Perhaps it will do me good on the dyspeptic side. Walked from three to six yesterday afternoon, saw some of Wilkie's prints in a shop-window—'Card-players,' 'Reading a Will,' &c. The pictures I had never seen—discovered for the first time what a genius was in this Wilkie: a great broad energy of humour and sympathy; a real painter in his way, alone among us since Hogarth's time—reflected with sorrow that the man was dead, that I had seen him with indifference, without recognition, while he lived. Poor Wilkie! A very stunted, timidly proud, uninviting, unproductive-looking man. I spoke with him a little in his own house while he was painting Sir David Baird and Seringapatam. The picture seemed to me a hollow cloud, as our other pictures are. The man himself was cold, shy, taciturn. I saw Wilkie

and did not know him. One should have his eyes opener. The Life of Wilkie by poor Allan Cunningham, the most chaotic compilation in the world, revealed to me the small but genuine spirit of a man struggling confusedly amid the boundless element of twaddle, dilettantism, shopkeeperism, and other impurity and inanity, of which our earth, and most of all the painter's earth, is at present full. He rebukes me by several of his qualities—by his patience, his submissive, unwearied endeavour in *such* element as he finds—a truly *well-doing* man. His 'Card-players' struck me more than any of his engravings I chanced to see last night; genuine life-figures, a great gluttonous substantiality, some glimpse of universal life looking out through the coarse boor shapes; the awfully massive hips and seats, the teeth and laugh of that President at the board head, &c. Alas! poor Wilkie is not here any more.

Oh, miserable 'slip the labour,' what is become of *thy* endeavour? Not a word of it yet got to paper; the very scheme and shadow of it hovering distracted in the cloud rack, sport of every wind. I am truly to be pitied, to be condemned.

So Carlyle had been when he began the 'French Revolution.' So it was, is, and must be with every serious man when he is first starting upon any great literary work. 'Sport of every wind' he seems to himself, for every trifle, piano or what not, distracts him. Sterling was in London, then on the edge of his last fatal illness. In the Journal of October 23 Carlyle enters:—

> Methinks I see a hieroglyphic bat
> Skim o'er the zenith in a slipshod hat,
> And to shed infants' blood with horrid strides
> A damned potato on a whirlwind rides.

Fabulously attributed to Nat Lee in Bedlam ; composed, I imagine, by John Sterling, who gave it me yesterday.

After this he seemed to make progress. 'Have been making an endeavour one other time to begin writing on Cromwell. Dare not say I have yet begun ; all beginning is difficult.' Many pages were covered, with writing of a sort. Mrs. Carlyle, on November 28, describes him as 'over head and ears in Cromwell,' and 'lost to humanity for the time being.' That he could believe himself started gave some peace to her ; but he was trying to make a consecutive history of the Commonwealth, and, as he told me afterwards, 'he could not get the subject rightly taken hold of.' There was no seed fitly planted and organically growing ; and the further he went, the less satisfied he was with himself. He used to say that he had no genius for literature. Yet no one understood better what true literary work really was, or was less contented to do it indifferently.

To John Sterling.

Chelsea : December 4, 1843.

I am very miserable at present ; or call it heavy-laden with fruitless toil, which will have much the same meaning. My abode is, and has been, figuratively speaking, in the centre of chaos. Onwards there is no moving in any yet discovered line, and where I am is no abiding—miserable enough.

The fact is, without any figure, I am doomed to write some book about that unblessed Commonwealth, and as yet there will no book show itself possible. The whole stagnancy

of the English genius two hundred years thick lies heavy on me. Dead heroes buried under two centuries of Atheism seem to whimper pitifully 'Deliver us! Canst thou not deliver us?' And alas! what am I, or what is my father's house? Confound it! I have lost four years of good labour in the business; and still the more I expend on it, it is like throwing good labour after bad. On the whole, you ought to pity me. Is thy servant a dead dog that these things have fallen on him? My only consolation is that I am struggling to be the most conservative man in England, or one of the most conservative. If the past times, only two centuries back, lie wholly a torpedo darkness and dulness, freezing as with Medusa glance all souls of men that look on it, where are our foundations gone? If the past time cannot become *melodious*, it must be forgotten, as good as annihilated; and we rove like aimless exiles that *have* no ancestors, whose world began only yesterday. That must be my consolation, such as it is.

I see almost nobody. I avoid sight rather, and study to consume my own smoke. I wish among your buildings [1] you would build me some small Prophet's chamber, fifteen feet square, with a separate garret, and a flue for smoking, within a furlong of your big house, sacred from all noises of dogs, cocks, pianofortes, insipid men, engaging some dumb old woman to light a fire for me daily and boil some kind of kettle.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: December 31, 1843.

The saddest story is that of my book, which occasions great difficulty. I not long ago fairly cast a great mass of it into the fire, not in any sudden rage at it, but after quiet

[1] Sterling was improving a house which he had lately bought at Ventnor.

deliberation, and deciding on this as the best that I could do. I am now trying the business on another side with hopes of better prosperity there. Prosper or not, I must hold on at it, on one side or the other. I *must* get in upon it, and drive it before me. But the truth is, it will be a long heavy piece of labour, and I must not grumble that my progress seems so small. I do make progress, as much progress *as I can;* and on the whole why should I plague myself or others about the quantity of my progress? I am a poor discontented creature, and ought at least to hold my peace and 'be thankful I am not in purgatory.'

One of his difficulties lay in his extreme conscientiousness. No sentence would be ever deliberately set down on paper without his assuring himself, if it related to a fact, that he had exhausted every means of ascertaining that the fact was true as he proposed to tell it; or, if it was to contain a sentiment or opinion, without weighing it to see if it was pure metal and not cant or insincere profession. This, however, lay in his nature, and, though it might give him trouble, would give him no anxiety. But his misgiving was that he was creating no living organic work, but a dead manufactured one, and this was intolerable. He flung aside at last all that he had done, burnt part of it, as he said, locked away the rest, and began again, as he told his mother, 'on another side.' He gave up the notion of writing a regular history. He would make the person of Oliver Cromwell the centre of his composition, collect and edit, with introductions and connecting fragments of narrative, the extant letters and speeches of Oliver himself—this, at least, as a first operation—a plain and comparatively easy one. When

it was finished, he told me that he found to his surprise that he had finished all which he had to say upon the subject, and might so leave it.

With the new year he was working upon the fresh lines, still diffident, but in better humour with himself and his surroundings.

For my book (he wrote again to his mother on January 11 [1844]) I dare not say much about it, and, indeed, had better altogether keep silent and plague nobody with it further, for nobody can help me in it, do what he will. It is a most difficult book; but by the blessing of Heaven I hope to get it done yet, and to have accomplished something useful thereby. Nay, indeed, I am sometimes taught more distinctly than usual that *without* the blessing of Heaven *I cannot* get it done; which surely is a wholesome lesson, and one we should be thankful for, even though it come to us in pain. I have heard of an Italian popular preacher who one day before a grand audience fairly *broke down*, and had not a word to say. His shame was great; he blushed; he almost wept; but, gathering himself at last, he said: 'My friends, it is the punishment of my pride; let me lay it to heart and take a lesson by it.' So be it with us all. . . . The people in the next house, whose piano was so loud when I sate down to write, have behaved with the noblest chivalry. They keep their piano silent every day rigorously till two o'clock. At other hours I am not writing, and it does me no ill; rather does me *good*, when I reflect how civil the people are. There is great honour shown here to the literary man.

Journal.

February 2, 1844.—Engaged in a book on the *Civil Wars*, on Oliver Cromwell, or whatever the name of it prove to be;

the most frightfully *impossible* book of all I have ever before tried. It is several years since the thing took hold of me. I have read hundredweights of dreary books, searched dusty manuscripts, corresponded, &c. &c., almost with no result whatever. How often have I begun to write, and after a certain period of splunging and splashing found that there was yet no basis for me. Since my return from Scotland and Wales and the North in September last it is just about *five months* complete. Most part of that time I have been really assiduous with this book, or one or the other adjuncts of it, and there really stands now on my paper in any available shape, as it were correctly—*nothing*. Much I have blotted, fairly burnt out of my way. What will become of it and of me? Sometimes I get extremely distressed. What of that? Was it ever otherwise? Will it ever be? Carpenters with contrivances to secure me from noises, treaties about neighbouring pianos, complaints of barking dogs, above a hundred 'Musæum headaches;' no books but 'Rushworthian Torpedos;' little company that is not a torpedo to me; and, to crown the whole, not a vestige of work actually done. This is bad enough. The fact is, I am myself very much to blame. I am full of 'choler,' of impatience, alas! of insincerity of heart. There will be no good come by talking of it here. Yesterday at the Musæum. To-day in quiet snow, attempting to begin again to write somewhat. *Non omnes occiderunt soles.*

Scotland meanwhile was remembering Carlyle. The Edinburgh students were not alone in their effort to call him back across the *irremeabilis unda*.

As to my book (he wrote a fortnight later to Scotsbrig) it is not absolutely stopping, *but is going its own gate*, a much longer one than I expected it might be. I study to keep holding on. 'Slow fire does make sweet meat.' I think

I shall perhaps make something of it in the end, if I be at once patient and diligent. At all events, I must and will endeavour. This morning there came a letter from Sir David Brewster, about a Professorship in St. Andrews for me. I have already written to decline it. Professorships of that kind do not suit me now. They come a day behind the fair.

The offer of a Scotch professorship was unacceptable, but was of course gratifying. So in a higher degree was the begining of a new order of legislation setting aside the received doctrines of *laissez-faire*, which he might fairly think to be due at least in part to his own writings. Lord Ashley—Lord Shaftesbury, as he has been so long and so honourably known to us—must have the first place as having successfully carried through the great measure for the protection of the factory children. But Carlyle, too, had affected the thoughts of the younger generation of reflecting politicians, and made possible Lord Ashley's attack upon the political economists. It was with real delight that he informed his mother of the first introduction of this measure.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: March 30, 1844.

All the people are in controversy about Lord Ashley's proposal to restrict the hours of factory labour to twelve, with two allowed for meals—that is, ten hours in all. Numbers of people are loud and bitter against it. As for me, I rejoice greatly that the Government has in *any* way begun to deal with that horrid business, the state of the working people. Innumerable tasks lie there for all manner of wise governors and parliamenteers and prime ministers. Lord Ashley's Bill

was carried once; but Peel and Graham have turned again upon him, saying they will go out if he carry it; so that probably it will be lost this time. But the business is *begun*, that is the great fact. The other day I saw one of the official people—Lord Elliot—in a company who were all talking about this. I told him the Government were absolutely bound either to try whether they could do some good to these people, or to draw them out in line and openly shoot them with grape. That would be mercy in comparison. He seemed much astonished; but I had a fair share of the company on my side.

It was always to his mother that he wrote first when he had anything interesting to tell, whether it was about an Act of Parliament, or the progress of his writing, or when the kitlin had an American mouse to send to the Auld Cat. She was seldom out of his thoughts, as he was seldom out of hers; and she was now growing old and ailing. Here is another of his letters to her:—

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: April 24, 1844.

You have been too frequently ill this spring, my dear mother; you really must take more pains with yourself. Let me beg Jenny,[1] too, to be in all ways careful of you. Alas! what can I do? I am far off, and cannot be of help to you myself, which I would so gladly be. Surely it is well the part of one and all of us to do for our good, true mother whatsoever we can. She did faithfully for us what lay in her when the time was. Jean tells me she has sent you a fowl or two. I have earnestly urged her to continue that.

[1] The sister living at home with her mother.

A little soup and wheat bread for dinner would certainly be much wholesomer than what you usually dine on. Besides, the good weather is now come—that of itself will be a great relief to you. Go up to the moor on a sunny day. The sight of the bonny world growing green again will be like a sermon to your pious heart, as indeed such a heart can nowhere want for sermons. The stars in the heavens and the little bluebells by the wayside alike show forth the handiwork of Him who is Almighty, who is All Good. In a bad, weak world, what would become of us did not our hearts understand at all times that this is even so? . . . I struggle away here, not always in the successfullest manner, yet trying always to make some progress in my work. 'Many a little makes a mickle.' It will be a long, *dreigh*,[1] and weary job; but I must plod along; keep chopping on, and hope to get through it in time. My health is not to be complained of. I should study well to husband what strength is given me, not fret, as I too often do, on what is denied me. Jane, too, gets better in the bright weather. All is bright here—sunny, and full of blossom. I study to go out to dinner as little as possible, and write refusals to the right and left. Dinners will do nothing for me; only the getting on with my book will do something. . . . Jeffrey is here in poorish health, but much better than he was. He is nearly of your age, but grows no more serious as he grows older. At least, he thinks proper to affect the same light ways—to me not the beautifullest in an old man.

How anxious he was about his mother—how inexpressibly dear she was to him—appears from a note in his Journal:—

[1] *Dreigh*, tedious.

May 8.—My dear old mother has, I doubt, been often poorly this winter. They report her *well* at present; but, alas! there is nothing in all the earth so stern to me as that constantly advancing inevitability, which indeed has terrified me all my days.

The same day he enters:—

My progress in 'Cromwell' is frightful. I am no day absolutely idle, but the confusions that lie in my way require far more fire of energy than I can muster on most days, and I sit not so much working as painfully looking on work. A thousand times I have regretted that this task was ever taken up. My heart was never *rightly* in it. My conscience it rather was that drove me on. My chief motive now is a more and more burning desire to have done with it. *Eheu, eheu!* I am very weak in health, too. I am oftenest very sad. The figure of Age, of greyhaired weakness, twilight, and the inevitable night never came on me so forcibly as this year. Age is sad, yet it is noble after a sort; the advance of it upon one is a peculiar tragedy, new for every new life. Words are weak in general to express what I feel. Thou art verily growing old, and thou hast never been young; and thy life has amounted to this poor paltriness, and, &c. &c. &c. There is no wisdom in writing such thoughts, or even in more than partially entertaining them. The Future alone belongs to us. Let us doubly and trebly struggle to profit by *that*—turn *that* to double and treble account. Oh heavens! get on with thy 'Cromwell.'

The dissatisfaction of Carlyle with his own work, as long as he was engaged upon it, is a continuous feature in his character. 'The "French Revolution" was worth nothing.' 'To have done with it' was

the chief desire which he had. 'To have done with it' was his chief desire again now. 'To have done with it' was the yet more passionate cry in the prolonged agony of 'Frederick.' The art of composition was merely painful to him, so conscious was he always of the distance between the fact as he could represent it and the fact as it actually was. He could be proud when he measured himself against other men; but his estimate of his merit, considered abstractedly, was utterly low. His faults disgusted him; his excellences he could not recognise; and when the work was done and printed, he was surprised to find it so much better than he had thought.

It is always so. The better a man is morally, the less conscious he is of his virtues. The greater the artist, the more aware he must be of his shortcomings. If excellence is to be its own only reward, poor excellence is in a bad way; for the more there is of it, the less aware of itself it is allowed to be. There is and must be, however, a certain comfort in the sense that a man is doing a right thing, if not well, yet as well as he can. Flashes of this kind do occasionally shine in among Carlyle's sad meditations. On May 31 he reports to his mother:—

My book now goes along better or worse, though still far too slowly. I am now, however, beginning to see *above* ground some fruit of the unspeakable puddlings and welterings I had underground. I do hope sometimes that I shall get the poor book done, and that it will turn out to have been worth doing. Oliver Cromwell is an actually pious, praying, God-fearing, Bible-reading man, and struggles in

the high places of the world before God and man to do what he finds written in his Bible—an astonishing spectacle, unexampled, altogether incredible to the beggarly Peel, Russell, and company that have got the guidance of the world now, to all our sorrows. If I can show Oliver as he is, I shall do a good turn; but it is terribly difficult to such an age as this is and has long been.

There was to be no Scotland for Carlyle this year. The starting with 'Cromwell' had been so hard that he did not mean to pause over it till it was done; and an occasional rest of a day or two at the houses of friends near London was all that he intended to allow himself. It was his wife's turn to have a holiday. She had not been in the North since she had lost her mother. All the last summer had been spent with the workmen in Cheyne Row. In autumn and winter she had been ill as usual with coughs, sleeplessness, and nervous headaches. As long as the cold weather lasted she had not been well for a single day, and only her indomitable spirit seemed to keep her alive at all. She never complained—perhaps fortunately—as with Carlyle to suffer in any way was to complain loudly and immediately, and when complaint was absent he never realised that there could be occasion for it. Anyway she was now to have a holiday. She was to go first to her uncle at Liverpool, then to the Paulets at Seaforth, then to stay with Geraldine Jewsbury at Manchester; then, if she wished, to go to Scotland. She was always economical, and travelled at smallest cost. Money matters no longer, happily, required such narrow attention as in former years. Her letters (or parts of them) describing her

adventures are published in the 'Letters and Memorials.' Carlyle, busy as he was, made time to write to her regularly, with light affectionate amusing sketches of his visitors or the news of the day; most particularly of the progress of the new acquaintance which was to have so serious an influence on her own future peace. . . Mr. and Lady Harriet Baring, whom he had met two years previously, were now both of them becoming his intimate friends. From Mr. Baring[1] there are many letters preserved among Carlyle's papers. They exhibit not only respect and esteem, but the strongest personal confidence and affection, which increased with fuller knowledge, and ceased only with death. They show, too, a fuller understanding of, and agreement with, Carlyle's general views than are to be found in almost any of those of his other correspondents. From Lady Harriet, too, there are abundance of notes, terse, clear, and peremptory, rather like the commands of a sovereign than the easy communications of friendship. She was herself gifted, witty, unconventional, seeing men and things much as they were, and treating them accordingly. She recognised the immense superiority of Carlyle to everyone else who came about her. She admired his intellect; she delighted in his humour. He at first enjoyed the society of a person who never bored him, who had a straight eye, a keen tongue, a disdain of nonsense, a majestic arrogance. As they became more intimate, the great lady affected his imagination. He was gratified at finding himself appreciated by a brilliant woman, who ruled supreme

[1] Lord Ashburton afterwards.

over half of London society. She became Gloriana, Queen of Fairyland, and he, with a true vein of chivalry in him, became her rustic Red Cross Knight, who, if he could, would have gladly led his own *Una* into the same enchanting service. The 'Una,' unfortunately, had no inclination for such a distinguished bondage. The Barings had a villa at Addiscombe, and during the London season frequently escaped into the Surrey sunshine. Carlyle had been invited to meet a distinguished party there.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, at Liverpool.

Chelsea: July 7, 1844.

Yesterday I did go to the Barings, but I got home the same night, which was an immense point. We were a truly sublime party, as many as the table would hold. Lord Howick and his wife, Earl Grey's son, a thin, lame man, turned of forty, looking very weak of body, but earnest, clear, affectionate, and honest, with good talent, too, for the spiritual part; the Lady Howick, a pale, aquiline, dark-eyed beauty, bleached white, who did not captivate me or estrange me; the immortal old Lady Holland, really a kind of Witch of the (Kensington) Alps, very impressive in her way. She is terribly broken, poor old lady! has a doctor, the strangest little fellow I have seen, who did not speak one word, good or bad, but seemed happy and perfect in the social gesticulations. Besides him, she carries with her a page, and an old woman to rub her legs. These, with the natural et cæteras, almost fill a house of themselves. Buller of course was there, as in his home; Stanley, too, again, but without his wife; he and others too tedious to mention. The gooseberries were ripe; I had a pocket of cigars, and other

smokers to keep me company. The day was soft, grey, without rain : a temperature like silk. The Lady Harriet is the most consummate of landladies, regardless of expense. Baring himself had radiances of real talent. He is, I do think, a good, modest man. The whole matter went off with effect. It is really entertaining to me to be a part of such a company now and then. Their art in speech, more and more noticeable gradually, is decidedly a thing to be considered valuable, venerable. Real good breeding, as the people have it here, is one of the finest things now going in the world. The careful avoidance of all discussion, the swift hopping from topic to topic, does not agree with me ; but the graceful skill they do it with is beyond that of minuets.

Among other subjects, we came over, pretty late in the evening, upon Mazzini's letters.[1] Brougham had been privately telling all people in the Lords one day that Mazzini was a scamp after all, that he once 'kept a gaming house.' So Stanley reported, glad of any stab to Brougham. The old stern Witch of the Alps thereupon asked Lady Harriet what he really was, this Mazzini. 'A Revolutionary man, the head of young Italy,' answered she. 'Oh, then, they surely ought to take him up,' rejoined the Witch. Our adroit hostess hinted No, and that she herself knew him. 'What ?' exclaimed the astonished Witch, with wide-open eyes. The other persisted, with the gentlest touch of light irrefragability, 'had actually asked him to come and see her.' I added, addressing the Witch, 'He is a man well worth seeing, and not at all specially anxious to be seen.' 'And did he not keep a gaming-house ?' said she. 'He had never the faintest shadow of connection with that side of human

[1] Opened in the English Post Office, about which there was so loud a stir in those years.

business,' said I. 'The proudest person in this company is not farther above keeping a gaming-house than Mazzini is.' 'That means Byng' (an absurd old curly-headed diner-out whom they call Poodle Byng), said Buller, looking at the man, upon which an explosion of laughter swallowed up my over emphasis and the whole discussion in a lightly felicitous manner.

A certain Mr. Something (Kane, I think: really a very civil official gentleman) volunteered to give me half his cab to Piccadilly—a blessed arrangement for me, for Mr. Kane and I smoked in a very social manner all the way, and the drive did me great good, so that to-day I am far less damaged than could have been anticipated.

The fine society did not make Carlyle forget his own nearer attentions:—

July 13.

It is poor Goody's birthday when she reads this; and one ought to have said what the inner man sufficiently feels: that one is right glad to see the brave little Goody with the mind's and the heart's eye on such an occasion, and wishes and prays all good in this world and in all worlds to one's poor Goody—a brave woman, and, on the whole, a 'Necessary Evil'[1] to a man. . . . And now, dearest, here is a small gift, one of the smallest ever sent. Do not think it cost me any trouble to buy the thing; once fairly in the enterprise, there was a real pleasure in going through with it. I tried hard for a workbox, but there was none I could recommend to myself. I was forced to be content with a little jewel-box, and there, you see, is the key. Blessings on thee with it! I wish I had diamonds to fill the places with for my little

[1] Name by which he often laughingly described his wife.

wifie. I knew you had a jewel-box already, but this is a newer one, a far smaller one. Besides, I bought it very cunningly, and 'the lady, if she would like anything better, can at any time get it exchanged.' And so, dear Goody, kiss me and take my good wishes. While I am here there will never want one to wish thee all good. Adieu on the birth-day, and may the worst of our days be all done and the best still coming.

Thine evermore.

The 'sulphurous humour' lay close beside the tender, very far from extinct, not even dormant. What Carlyle could least endure was being bored. The anathemas which he heaped on unfortunate bores exceed Ernulphus's in exquisite variety. He mentions soon after this that three gentlemen from Edinburgh had called to see him, introduced by some acquaintance from Haddington. He describes them as 'wretched duds,' 'a precious three to be selected from all the populations of the world;' 'miserable snaffers full of animal magnetism, Free Kirk and other rubbish.' He 'had doubts whether not to rise with redhot oaths, and pack them all instantly into the street.' He says 'he bit in his rage as best he could,' took his hat, pretended business, 'and walked the three out instead of kicking them out.' 'One of Cavaignac's snorts was all that he could give to such things.' 'That visit was the beginning of sorrows to him.' Evening parties could not be wholly escaped. He had been invited to one 'at the Coleridges',' where he expected an equal degree of suffering, 'half thought he would fall sick and stick to Cromwell,' and 'wished he was in Goody's pocket.'

Luckily it did not turn out quite so ill. 'Trench, Maurice, Boxall the painter, and other shovel-hatted persons, male and female, were there assembled;' but he met a daughter of Southey, whom he was actually pleased to see, and Mrs. Henry Coleridge also, 'really a kind of Phantasmion, so small, so delicate, pretty, and orthodox wise.' In the worst extremities there was always the resource of Bath House.

Last night (he wrote on July 19) I called for Lady Harriet. The usual Buller sate there apparently almost asleep in the 'fever of digestion' when I entered. The lady herself, in spite of her sickness, is always brisk as a huntress. Buller brightened up soon, argued, talked with me, not to great purpose, but in a cheery, rational manner, presided over by this divinity, and with one cup of innocent black tea and a mouthful of polite human speech I came home little injured. Mazzini is authorised to call 'next week some evening.' Poor victim! At a certain turn of the conversation I was asked to come out to Addiscombe next Sunday, and could not for the moment find means of declining, but did internally decline, and must externally now send some note to that effect. It is very brilliant all at Addiscombe; wealth in abundance, ruled over by grace in abundance; but I—I—am bilious; I am busy—not equal to it for the present.

Some misgiving may have crossed Carlyle's mind that too near an intimacy in these great circles might not be profitable to him. As long as social distinctions survive, equality of position is a condition of healthy friendship; and though genius is said to level mere differences of rank, it creates inequalities of another kind, which rather complicate the situation than sim-

plify it. However this may have been, hard work and the London heat tired him out by the end of the summer. He was invited to stay at the Grange, a beautiful place belonging to the Barings in Hampshire, and as the visit was to be a short one he went. Mr. Baring's father, the Lord Ashburton of the American Treaty, still lived and reigned there. He had heard of Carlyle, and wished to make his acquaintance, as his Transatlantic wife did also. The Grange, in September especially, was the perfection of an English country palace. The habits of it did not suit Carlyle. He was off his sleep, woke early, could get no breakfast till ten, and no food but cigars and sunshine. But the park was beautiful, the riding delightful, 'the solitude and silence divine.' He tried to be amused and happy, and succeeded tolerably.

The Grange: September 12, 1844.

We are a small party. Lady Ashburton is a surgeon patient at present, a stripping off of the skin upon a carriage step, ill dealt with for some days back. She lies in a back drawing-room, keeps all the women about her all day, and we never see her till she is wheeled in at night to tea. She seems very fond of talking to me; a frank, rattling woman, with whom, perhaps, I shall grow to do very well. Were it not for Lady Harriet, who is herself a host, we should be ill off for women. My chief resource at present is the old Lord, a really good old man, of most solid, cheerful ways; fond of talking and being talked to above any rational thing.

September 14, 1844.

Alas! if I could sleep, I might be very well here: but sleep does not come, sleep flies; and I have nights in which the virtue of patience is very useful to me. I do study to

keep patient. In fact, there is something very soothing in the deep, dead silence, broken only by the rare hooting of a poor owl, seemingly a mile off, who appeared to be the only living thing awake beside myself. I start generally in the morning with a dull headache, very stupid; but the breezy fresh air, and the constant motion they keep one in, drive it away gradually, and I feel pretty well again.

We are not a brilliant party here; nay, if it were not for the Lady Harriet and myself, we should be almost definable as a dull, commonplace one. Buller is not yet come, but is confidently expected to-night, and will be a welcome acquisition to us. Poodle Byng's companion was one Greville, an old official hack of quality who runs racehorses, whom I have often enough seen before: memorable as a man of true aristocratic manner, without any aristocratic endowment whatever—a Laïs without the beauty. He has Court gossip, political gossip, &c., and is civil to all persons, careless about all persons—equal nearly to zero. Lady Ashburton improves upon one—a square, solid American woman, happily without the accent; but with the rugged go-ahead character of that people. It is from her that your lover Baring takes his features. The old Lord Ashburton, especially as he smokes, is my favourite of all—a really good, solid, most cheery, sagacious, simple-hearted old man. He takes me long walks to see his new churches, his labourers' cottages, his old cedars and yew trees, carries in his pocket cigars, and talks and is talked to. To finish my description, I have only to say that our house is built like 'a Grecian temple,' of two stories; of immense extent, massive in appearance and fronting every way. The interior is by Inigo Jones, with modern improvements. The rooms are full of exquisite pictures, and there is every convenience. 'All things that were pleasant in life. But the all-wise, great Cre-a-a-tor, &c.'[1]

[1] See *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 226.

While this new acquaintance was rising up into Carlyle's sky, another was setting or had set. News were waiting for him when he returned to Cheyne Row, which melted the Grange and its grandeurs into bodiless vapour. John Sterling was dead. Of all the friends whom Carlyle had won to himself since he came to London, there was none that he valued as he valued this one. Sterling had been his spiritual pupil, his first, and also his noblest and best. Consumption had set its fatal mark upon him. His spirit had risen against it and defied it. He had fled for life in successive winters to Italy, to France, and then to Falmouth and to Italy again. If not better, there had been no sign that he was becoming definitely worse. He had lately settled at Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight. He had added to his house; he had hoped, as his friends had hoped before for him, that years of useful energy might still be granted to him. It seemed impossible that a soul so gifted, so brilliant, so generous, should have been sent upon the earth merely to show how richly it had been endowed, and to pass away while its promise was but half fulfilled. But in this past summer he had been visibly declining. To himself, if to no one else, it had become sternly certain that the end was now near; and on August 10 he had written the letter of farewell, printed by Carlyle in his lost friend's biography, which I am therefore at liberty to transfer to these pages.

To T. Carlyle.

Ventnor: August 10, 1844.

My dear Carlyle,—For the first time for many months it

seems possible to send you a few words; merely, however, for remembrance and farewell. On higher matters there is nothing to say. I tread the common road into the great darkness, without any thought of fear, and with very much of hope. Certainty, indeed, I have none. With regard to you and me, I cannot begin to write, having nothing for it but to keep shut the lid of those secrets with all the iron weights that are in my power. Towards me, it is still more true than towards England, that no man has been and done like you. Heaven bless you! If I can lend a hand when there, that will not be wanting. It is all very strange, but not a hundredth part so sad as it seems to the standers-by. Your wife knows my mind towards her, and will believe it without asseveration.

Yours to the last,
JOHN STERLING.

Sterling lingered for six weeks after writing this. He had been apparently dying more than once already, and yet had rallied. Carlyle could not believe that he was to lose him, and hoped that it might be so again. But it was not so to be. On September 18, within a day of Carlyle's return from the Grange, his friend was dead.

CHAPTER XIII.

A.D. 1845. ÆT. 50.

Summer in London—Mrs. Carlyle in Liverpool—Completion of 'Cromwell'—Remarks upon it—Effect of Cromwell's history on Carlyle's mind—Rights of majorities—Right and might—Reception by the world—Visit to the Barings—Lady Harriet and Mrs. Carlyle—Letter to Sir Robert Peel—Meditations.

STERLING'S death was the severest shock which Carlyle had yet experienced. Perhaps the presence of a real sorrow saved him from fretting over the smaller troubles of life. He threw himself the more determinately into his work. All the remainder of this year and all the next till the close of the summer he stayed at home, as far as possible alone, and seeing few friends in London except the Barings. His wife had been improved by her excursion. She had been moderately well since her return. Strong she never was; but for her the season had been a fair one. In July 1845, the end of 'Cromwell' was coming definitely in sight. She could be spared at home, and went off again to her relations at Liverpool. Carlyle had another horse—'Black Duncan' this one was called. He rode daily, and sent regular bulletins to his 'Necessary Evil'—many, through haste, undated. The Barings were still his chief resource outside his serious occupations.

Chelsea: July 27, 1845.

Visit to Addiscombe—not the very best of joys; but one ought to be content with it. I had a great deal of talk with Everett, the American Ambassador, who surprises me much, as a thorough drawling Yankee in manner, yet with intelligence and real gentlemanhood looking through it. Senior, seeing me there, came up in the most cordial manner to shake hands, and we even had a quantity of smoking together and philosophical discoursing together—by motion of his—with unabated aversion of mine. Peace to him!

August 1, 1845.

Thy bright little missives are a real consolation to me in my solitude here—a solitary wrestle with the blockheadisms. That is what I have just now, and there is need of some consolation at times if it could be had.

The leech[1] is very well. I went and saw it this morning; it has an allowance of fresh water every day, and complains of nothing, lying all glued together at the top of the glass (the little villain), and leading a very quiet life of it, never even asking what is taxes? Wednesday proved wet—no riding possible. Walked up to Barnsdom in the evening. The poor lady had cold; was sitting with a fire—even she: we are all as cold here as you are in Lancashire. Yesternight had a grand ride over in Surrey; took the conceit out of Duncan; made him gallop at discretion till quite tame. Did my own wearied self some good by the job. After that, while at tea, Thackeray.

August —.

Just now I have finished copying the last letter of Oliver's. I will try hard yet to be through the *original*

[1] One of Mrs Carlyle's singular pets, of which her husband had charge in her absence.

stuff this week. There will then be a conclusion of some kind to do; an index to set going. After which I am off *in's Freie. Ay de mi!* The merits of your letters are mirrored in a very fair glass when it is I that read them, and if I call them 'bits of letters' (she had laughingly resented that expression of his), it is perhaps all the better for them from a soul so sulky, so dispirited, dead and buried, as mine now is, in this horrid business of mine. Courage! courage! it will be done soon, and then perhaps better days will *come*.

August.

This place is getting very empty. Last night I came accidentally on the Kensington Gardens band. Their retinue of park horses has dwindled to mere nothing, a thing you could ride without difficulty through the middle of. It is astonishing what real pity I do feel for these poor squires and squires' daughters, all parading about in such places. Good heavens! and is this what you call the flower of life: and age, and darkness, and the grand Perhaps lying close in the rear of it—'Damn ye, be wae for yoursel'.'[1] So I am too; and will now run and put on my riding clothes—just three minutes for it. Adieu. Ever your affectionate, *bad*

T. C.

Mrs. Carlyle had fallen in at Liverpool with a Unitarian clergyman named J. M., with whom she had conversed on serious matters with considerable interest.[2] M. had seemed to her to be inclined to leave his Unitarianism and to become a pupil of Carlyle.

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 260.

[2] See *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 322, &c. I may as well say that *initial letters* are not to be relied upon, as I frequently change them.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Chelsea: August 8, 1845.

What did M—— say to you? It was a great thing in him to quote me in his preaching; but, like the deacon of the weavers at Dumfries, one must exclaim, 'Oh, gentlemen, remember that I am but a man.' Thursday night, after a day of thunder, I had my longest ride since you heard last, far out towards Harrow. As I turned homewards there rose visible from the big beautiful Babylon a *tree of smoke*, which said very plainly, 'Here is a house on fire.' It grew and grew, till it covered whole fields of air. I never in any ride saw a more impressive object, seeming to say with a tragical tone of reproach, 'Wilt thou take *me* for *picturesque?* I am the blazing furniture of terrified, distracted men and women.' Phew!

August.

Harvest is a month too late; will hardly fail therefore to be bad; and if the railway bubble burst at the same time, as is likeliest, there will be a precious winter for the poor operatives again, and those that have charge of them. The naked, beggarly greed and mammon-worship of this generation is sorrowfully apparent at present; and I confess sometimes I do not care if their 'wealth' and all the greasy adjuncts of it *were* actually to take wings and fly away. I think we might have a less detestable existence without it; a chance for a less fated life-element than this.

Good be with thee, dear little Goody mine. 'We clamb the hill together' in a very thorny but not paltry way. Now let us sit and look around a little. We shall have 'to totter down' also; but 'hand in hand we'll go.'

Adieu, dear Jeannie, T. C.

August 18.

Really, I begin almost to pity poor J. M. The lot of a

poor man, of so many poor men, doomed to twaddle all their lives in Socinian jargon, and look at this Divine Universe through distracted, despicable Jew-Greek spectacles, and a whole Monmouth Street of 'Old Clo,' seems to me very sad. . . . The last speech of Oliver's is fairly ready for printing. Not a line of his now remains, thank Heaven! I have now only to have him die, and then to wind up in the briefest endurable way. I say to myself, why should not, for instance, the *first* of September actually *see* me free of the job altogether, and ready for the road somewhither? We will try. As a preliminary I have started to-day by—a blue pill and castor. Oh heavens! But I suppose it was the most judicious step of all.

August 21.

I know not if you mean to take Egypt's advice [I do not know the person alluded to], and write some book. I have often said you might, with successful effect; but the impulse, the necessity, has mainly to come from within. It is a poor trade otherwise, so we will be content with Goody whether she ever comes to a book or not. One way or other, all the light, and order, and energy, and genuine *Thatkraft* or available virtue we had, does come out of us, and goes very infallibly into God's Treasury, living and working through eternities there—very infallibly, whether the morning papers say much about it or say nothing; whether the wages we get be more or less! We are not lost; not a solitary atom of us—of one of us. When I think of our Oliver Cromwell and of the fate of a Burns and other such phenomena, I am very indifferent on the book side. Greater, I often think, is he that can hold his peace, that can *do* his bit of light, instead of speaking it. . . . *Eheu!* what a business is the society of Adam's posterity becoming for me—a *considerable of a bore* for most part. Helps

walked home to the door with me last night. We saw Green, the aeronaut, just get aloft from Vauxhall, throwing out all manner of fireworks, red, green, and indigo-coloured stars, and transitory milky ways, the best he could, poor devil! He was hanging a goodish way up in the air, quite invisible except by a cluster of confused fireworks, which looked very small in the great waste deep of things, and did not last above half a minute in all. No paltrier phenomenon was ever contrived for the solacement of human souls. I figured the wretched mortal sailing through the chill, clear moonshiny night, destitute of *any* object now, and with peril of his life, for the sake of keeping his life in, and had a real pity for him. I am very dark as to the extreme closing up of 'Cromwell,' but it seems to me as if it lay quite close at hand—some one bright day, all that was needed for it—perhaps to-morrow. Really, I am quite near it.

August 23.

Do not seduce poor J. M. from his Unitarian manger, poor fellow! I do not in the least want proselytes. *Ach Gott!* no! What is the use of them? And for himself it might cut off the very staff of bread. Let him hang on there till the rope of itself gives way with him.

You will be sure to see me if you continue staying where you are. My one fixed element of a plan is to go to Annandale, and the way thither leads me through Lancashire. I could also be a very pretty guest at Seaforth, I too for a few days, and be happy and much liked, if the devil of sleeplessness and indigestion did not mark me for a peculiar man. I do hope to have done all my Oliver writing, good heavens! the day after to-morrow.

Fuz (John Forster) came here the night before last, talked long, or was talked to, really not in a quite distracted manner, and passionately solicited and thankfully received your ad-

dress. They—Dickens, he, and a squad of that sort—have decided to act a play at one of the small theatres, private, to five hundred friends. It is actually to be on the 21st of next month, and it is an immense feature of it to Fuz that you are to be there. The excellent Fuz!

August 26.

I have this moment *ended* Oliver; hang it! He is ended, thrums and all. I have nothing more to write on the subject, only mountains of wreck to burn. Not (any more) up to the chin in paper clippings and chaotic litter, hatefuller to me than most. I *am* to have a swept floor now again.

Thus was finished the first edition of the 'Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell'—the first edition—for other letters, other material of various kinds, came afterwards and had to be woven in with the rest; but essentially the thing was done on which Carlyle had been labouring for five years; and a few words may now be given to it.

This book is, in my opinion, by far the most important contribution to English history which has been made in the present century. Carlyle was the first to break the crust which has overlaid the subject of Cromwell since the Restoration, and to make Cromwell and Cromwell's age again intelligible to mankind. Anyone who will read what was written about the Protector before Carlyle's work appeared, and what has been written since, will perceive how great was the achievement. The enthusiast, led away by ambition, and degenerating into the hypocrite, the received figure of the established legend, is gone for ever. We

may retain each our own opinion about Cromwell, we may think that he did well or that he did ill, that he was wise or unwise; but we see the real man. We can entertain no shadow of doubt about the genuineness of the portrait; and, with the clear sight of Oliver himself, we have a new conception of the Civil War and of its consequences. The book itself carries marks of the difficulty with which it was written. It has no clear continuity; large gaps are left in the story. Contrary to his own rule, that the historian should confine himself to the facts, with the minimum of commentary, Carlyle breaks in repeatedly in his own person, pats his friends upon the back, expands, applauds, criticises to an extent which most readers would wish more limited. This, however, is to be remembered, that he was reproducing letters and speeches, of which both the thought and the language were obsolete—obsolete, or worse than obsolete, for most of it had degenerated into cant, insincere in everyone who uses such expressions now, and therefore suggesting insincerity in those who used them then. Perhaps he allowed too little for our ability to think for ourselves. But he had seen how fatally through this particular cause the character of the Commonwealth leaders had been obscured, and, if he erred at all, he erred on the right side. It is his supreme merit that ne first understood the speeches made by Cromwell in Parliament, and enabled us to understand them. Printed as they had hitherto been, they could only confirm the impression, either that the Protector's own mind was hopelessly confused, or that he purposely concealed what was in it. Carlyle has shown that they

were perfectly genuine speeches, not eloquent, as modern parliamentary speeches are, or aspire to be thought; but the faithful expressions of a most real and determined meaning, about which those who listened to him could have been left in no doubt at all. Such a feat was nothing less than extraordinary. It was not a 'whitewashing,' as attempts of this kind are often scornfully and sometimes deservedly called. It was the recovery of a true human figure of immense historical consequence from below two centuries of accumulated slander and misconception, and the work was completely done. No hammering or criticising has produced the least effect upon it. There once more Cromwell stands actually before us, and henceforth will stand, as he was when he lived upon the earth. He may be loved or he may be hated, as he was both loved and hated in his own time; but we shall love or hate the man himself, not a shadow or a caricature any more.

Detailed criticism of the book, or of any part of it, would be out of place in a biography, and I shall not attempt such a thing. I may mention, however, what Carlyle told me of the effect upon his own mind of his long study of the Commonwealth and its fortunes.

Many persons still believe that, if the army had not pushed the quarrel to extremities, if the 'unpurged' Parliament had been allowed to complete its treaty with the King, the constitutional fruits of the struggle might have been secured more completely than they actually were; that the violent reaction would never have taken place which was provoked by the King's execution; that the Church of England could and

would have then been completely reformed and made Protestant in form and substance; the pseudo-Catholicism—Episcopacy, Liturgy, and Ritual—which has wrought us all so much woe being swept clean from off the stage.

Speculations on what might have been are easy. We see what actually happened; what would have happened we can only guess. Charles, it is certain, was false—how false is now only completely known when the secret negotiations of himself and the Queen with the Catholic Powers have been brought to light. No promises which he had made would have bound him one moment beyond the time when he could safely break them; nor could anyone say what the composition of a new House of Commons might be after the next election. Taking the country through, the Royalists and the Moderates together were in the majority in point of numbers, and Cromwell's conclusion was that, so far as religion was concerned, the cause for which he and the army had fought would be utterly lost if the treaty was carried out. Wearied England, satisfied with having secured control of the purse-strings, would hand over the sour fanatics to Charles's revenge. Carlyle was satisfied that Cromwell was right, and he drew from it a general inference of the incapacity of a popular assembly to guide successfully and permanently the destinies of this or any other country. No such body of men was ever seen gathered together in national council as those who constituted the Long Parliament. They were the pick and flower of God-fearing England, men of sovereign ability, of the purest patriotism—a senate of kings.

If they failed, if they had to be prevented by armed force from destroying themselves and the interests committed to them, no other Parliament here or anywhere was likely to do better. Any pilot or council of pilots might answer, with smooth water and fair winds; but Parliaments, when circumstances were critical, could only talk, as their name denoted. Their resolutions would be half-hearted, their action a compromise between conflicting opinions, and therefore uncertain, inadequate, alternately rash or feeble, certain to end in disaster at all critical times when a clear eye and a firm hand was needed at the helm.

This was one inference which Carlyle drew. Another was on the rights of so-called 'majorities.' He had been bred a Radical, and a Radical he remained to the last, in the sense that he believed the entire existing form of human society, with its extremes of poverty and wealth, to be an accursed thing, which Providence would not allow to endure. He had been on the side of Catholic emancipation, hoping that the wretched Irish peasantry might get some justice by it. He had welcomed the Reform Bill, imagining it to mean that England was looking in earnest for her wisest men, and would give them power to mend what was amiss. He had found, as he said, that it was but the burning off the dry edges of the straw on the dunghill; that the huge damp putrid mass remained rotting where it was, and thus would remain, for anything that an extended suffrage would do to cure it. No result had come of the Reform Bill that he could care for. The thing needed was wisdom. Parliaments reflected the character of those who returned

them. The lower the franchise, the less wisdom you were likely to find; and after each change in that direction the Parliament returned was less fit, not more fit, than its predecessor. In politics as in all else, Carlyle insisted always that there was a *right* way of doing things and a *wrong* way; that by following the *right* way alone could any good end be arrived at; and that it was as foolish to suppose that the *right* way of managing the affairs of a nation could be ascertained by a majority of votes, as the right way of discovering the longitude, of cultivating the soil, of healing diseases, or of exercising any one of the million arts on which our existence and welfare depend.

This conclusion he had arrived at, ever since he had seen what came and did not come of the Reform Bill of 1832; and it had prevented him from interesting himself in contemporary politics. But Cromwell's history had shown him that the *right* way had other means of asserting itself besides oratory and ballot-boxes and polling booths. The world was so constructed that the strongest, whether they were more or fewer, were the constituted rulers of this world. It must be so, unless the gods interfered, because there was no appeal. If one man was stronger than all the rest of mankind combined, he would rule all mankind. They would be unable to help themselves. But the world was also so constructed, owing to the nature of the Maker of it, that superior strength was found in the long run to lie with those who had the right on their side. A good cause gave most valour to its defenders; and it was from this, and this alone, the supremacy of good over evil was maintained. Right-minded men

would bear much rather than disturb existing arrangements—would submit to kings, to aristocracies, to majorities, as long as submission was possible; but, if driven to the alternative of seeing all that they valued perish or trying other methods, they would prove that, though they might be outvoted in the count of heads, they were not outvoted in the court of destiny. Superior justice in the cause made superior men—men who would make it good in spite of numbers. The best were the strongest, and so in the end would always prove, 'considering who had made them strong.' Behind all constitutions, never so popular, lay an ultimate appeal to force. Majorities, as such, had no more right to rule than kings, or nobles, or any other persons or groups of persons, to whom circumstances might have given temporary power. The right to rule lay with those who were right in mind and heart, whenever they chose to assert themselves. If they tried and failed, it proved only that they were not right *enough* at that particular time. But, in fact, no honest effort ever did fail; it bore its part in the eventual settlement. The strong thing, in the main, was the right thing, because the world was not the Devil's; and the final issue would be found to prove it whenever the question was raised. Society was in a healthy condition only when authority was in the hands of those most fit to exercise it. As long as kings and nobles were kings and nobles indeed, superior in heart and character, the people willingly submitted to them, and gave them strength by their own support. When they forgot the meaning of their position, lived for ambition and pleasure, and so ceased to be superior, their strength passed from them, and

with their strength their authority. That was what happened, and was happening still, in England. There being no longer any superiority of class over class, the integers of society were falling into anarchy, and, to avoid quarrelling, might agree for a time to decide their differences by a majority of votes; but it could be but for a time only, unless all that was great and noble in humanity was to disappear for ever; for the good and the wise were few, and the selfish and the ignorant were many; the many would choose to represent them men like themselves, not men superior to themselves; and, under pain of destruction, it was indispensable that means must be found by which the good and wise should be brought to the front, and not the others. Nature had her means of doing it, and in extremity would not fail to use them.

In some such frame of mind Carlyle was left after he had finished his 'Cromwell.' I have described in my own words what, in his abrupt and scornful dialect, he often expressed to me. He was never a Conservative for he recognised that, unless there was a change, impossible except by miracle, in the habits and character of the wealthy classes, the gods themselves could not save them. But the Radical creed of liberty, equality, and government by majority of votes, he considered the most absurd superstition which had ever bewitched the human imagination—at least, outside Africa.

Cromwell thus disposed of, he was off for Scotland, 'wishing' as he said, to be amiable, but dreadfully bilious, and almost sick of his life, if there were not, hopes of improvement. He joined his wife at Seaforth, stayed a day or two with the Paulets there, and then,

leaving Mrs. Carlyle to return and take care of the house in Cheyne Row, he made his way on by the usual sea route to Annan and Scotsbrig.

His letters, now that he had leisure, became free and ample again, no reaction after exertion having this time set in. He was, for him, happy, relieved of his long burden; his Journal, which contains chiefly a record of his sorrows, was left untouched. His complaints, such as they were, had reasonable external causes.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Chelsea.

Scotsbrig: September 13, 1845.

My poor Goody is whirling away southward, while I sit here giving her some note of my arrival northward. We are strangely shovelled to and fro in this much too locomotive world. It was above an hour after you left me before our steamship got its tumult consummated and hauled itself out of harbour. In my life I have seen few more distressing and disgusting uproars; indeed, the whole voyage surpassed in discomfort for me any piece of travelling I have executed for years. We saw very near at hand the Vanity Fair of Liverpool: cockneys in full action near the Rock, tents on the sand, swings and whirligigs were very evident; squealing of fiddles, popping of ginger-beer corks were too conceivable. Hudson, our captain, was engaged in clapping handcuffs on a drunken drover who had proved quarrelsome. One of my fellow-passengers in the cabin proved to be that big Thomson, the cattle-dealer, who once called at Chelsea with Macqueen;[1] grown several stones heavier, faced like Silenus, full of dock English and familiarity, of which the thought was

[1] *Life of Carlyle—First Forty Years*, vol. ii. p. 469.

horrible to me. By him my honoured name was imparted to the ship's company in general, and I had the strangest addresses, free and easy as in the Age of Gold. My difficulty not to break into sheer vocal execration was considerable. Then the sleeping-rooms !—but I will talk no more of it. I do not think a more brutal element of human savagery could have been found in any part of British land or water. About half-past seven next morning I was right glad to see Jamie waiting for me at the jetty. We got to Scotsbrig before ten, and Jenny and my mother had some tea for me ; and I have glided about ever since, or lain on beds or chairs when I could get it done, very much in the humour (as I fancy it) of Jonah when he found himself vomited from the whale's belly—exceedingly confused and uncertain what his movements ought to be.

At midday I walked with my mother to the moor. It was really as if Pan slept. The sun and sky were bright as silver ; the seas and hills lay round, and noise of all kinds had entirely hushed itself, as if the whole thing had been a picture or a dream, which, in fact, the philosophers tell us it properly is. Nothing can exceed my mother's gratitude to you—your two letters themselves had given wonderful delight. *Most of them, I think, are committed to memory—have committed themselves on repeated perusals* [italics mine]. It is worth while to write now and then on such terms.

'The mother' was now fast growing weaker. She brightened up at letters from her daughter-in-law, or on visits from her illustrious son, whom all the world was talking of; but 'all had grown old' about her, except her affection, which seemed younger than ever. Carlyle, while at Scotsbrig, was her constant companion, drove her about in the old gig, carried her down to see his sister Mary at Annan, or his sister

Jean at Dumfries; and so the days passed on with autumnal composure, sad but not unhappy. Now and then troublesome proof-sheets came, which would stir the bile a little. But he kept himself patient, found 'days of humiliation and reflection' extremely useful to him, and grumbled little. 'All work,' he said, 'if it be nobly done, is about alike: really so—one has no reward out of it except even that same. The spirit it was done in, that is blessed or that is accursed—that is all.' The world was saying that he was a great man. He did not believe it. Mrs. Paulet had written some wildly flattering letter calling him 'the greatest man in Europe.' 'Good heavens!' he said of this; 'he feels himself in general almost the smallest man in Annandale; being very bilious, confused, and sleepless; let him never trouble himself what magnitude he is of. As to his *deserts*, he deserved, if it came to that, to be in purgatory.' In one of his letters he described a long, late, solitary walk.

I passed through old localities like a ghost, and very much in the humour of one; past the Pennersaughs Churchyard, where my grandfather and great-grandfather (the farthest ancestor I can name) lie buried; past Mein Bridge, where I have burned whins and done exploits in fishing eels and in other things. *Ay de mi!* it was better than many sermons, sweet though sad.

Men of genius who make a mark themselves in literature, in art or science, or in any way which brings their name before the world, find ready admittance into the higher social circles; but the *entrée* is granted less readily to their wives and daughters. Where this

arrangement is allowed, the feeling on both sides is a vulgar one; the great lady is desirous merely that a person who is talked about shall be seen in her reception rooms, and is not anxious for the burden of an acquaintance with his inferior connections; the gifted individual is vain of appearing in the list of guests at aristocratic mansions, and is careless of the slight upon his family. The Barings were infinitely superior to paltry distinctions of this kind, nor would Carlyle have cared for their acquaintance if they had not been. He was far too proud in himself, and he had too high a respect for his wife, to visit in lordly saloons where she would be unwelcome. Mr. Baring had called on Mrs. Carlyle, had seen her often, and had cordially admired her. With Lady Harriet, though they had probably met, there had not yet been an opportunity of intimacy; but Carlyle was most anxious that his wife, too, should be appreciated as she deserved to be by a lady whom he himself so much admired. Mrs. Buller, an experienced woman of the world, who knew both Lady Harriet and Mrs. Carlyle, was convinced that they would not suit each other, and that no good would come from an attempt to bring them into close connection. To Carlyle Mrs. Buller's forebodings seemed absurd. With all his knowledge, he was innocent of insight into the subtleties of women's feelings, and it was with unmixed pleasure that he heard of a visit of his wife to Bath House on her own account, soon after her return.

I am very glad (he said). There is nothing to hinder you, in spite of Mrs. Buller's prediction, to get on very well there,

I should hope. Persons of sense, with no tale-bearers or other piece of concrete insanity between them, *can* get on very well. The Lady Harriet has a genius for ruling. Well! I don't know but she may; and, on the whole, did you ever see any lady that had *not* some slight touch of a genius that way, my Goodikin? I know a lady—but I will say nothing, lest I bring mischief about my ears—nay, she is very obedient, too, that little lady I allude to, and has a genius for being ruled withal. Heaven bless her always! Not a bad little dame at all. She and I did aye very weel together; and, 'tweel, it was not every one that could have done with her.

The first impressions had apparently been favourable on both sides. Mrs. Carlyle wrote brightly to him both about the Bath House affair and everything else. Her letters during his absence were exceptionally lively and entertaining. The reader of the 'Letters and Memorials'[1] will remember her adventures with the dog next door and the whisky bottle which had obtained its silence. Carlyle was enchanted with her, most especially because at Scotsbrig he was suffering from a similar cause.

That dog (he says) was more or less the sorrow of my life all the time you were away, though I said nothing of it. Bow-wow-wow at all hours of the day, especially at night when one was shut in. Never was bottle of whisky better bestowed if it quiet the damnable brute even for a month or two. Alas! one cannot get much quiet in this world. Here in mornings when one awakes before five there is a combination of noises, the arithmetical catalogue of which might

[1] Vol. i. p. 369.

interest a mind of sensibility—cocks, pigs, calves, dogs, clogs of women's feet, creaking of door-hinges, masons breaking whinstone, and carts loading stones. But I have learnt to care nothing about it. I think it is a law of Nature, and are not they poor brothers and sisters—poor old mothers, too, toiling away in the midst of it? Once or twice I have fallen asleep in the midst of the whole concert of discords. We shall be quiet one day. The destinies, I think, do mean that at least for us.

'Cromwell' done with, he was beginning to consider to what next he should put his hand, and 'Frederick the Great' was already hanging before him as a possibility. He had read Preuss's book in the year preceding. He was now meditating an expedition to Berlin to learn more about this 'greatest of modern men.' His stay in Scotland was to be short. After a fortnight of it he was thinking about his return. How it was to be was the question. The railway from London only reached to Preston, and the alternative was equally horrible—the coach from Carlisle thither or the steamer to Liverpool. One day he thought he would go 'to the whale' again, and say to it, 'Swallow me at once,' 'thou doest it at once.' The whale ultimately proved the least desirable of the various monsters. He chose the coach, and was at home again just when 'Cromwell' was appearing.

The reception of it was, as might be expected, in the highest degree favourable. There was little to offend, and every one was ready to welcome a fair picture of the great Protector. The sale was rapid, and after a few months, as the interest grew, fresh materials were contributed from unexpected quarters, to be added in

new editions. For the moment, however, Carlyle was left idle. He came back to find literally that he had nothing to do. 'Frederick' was still but a thought, and of all conditions that of want of occupation was what he was least fitted to endure. He had drawn his breath when he ended his work in September. He had felt idyllic. He and his poor wife had climbed the hill together by a thorny road. He had arrived at the height of his fame. He was admired, praised, and honoured by all England and America; nothing, he said, could now be more natural than that they should sit still and look round them a little in quiet. Quiet, unhappily, was the one thing impossible. He admired quiet as he admired silence, only theoretically. Work was life to him. Idleness was torture. The cushion on which he tried to sit still was set with spines. Mrs. Carlyle says briefly that after he came back 'she was kept in a sort of worry.' The remedy which was tried was worse than the disease. Mr. Baring and Lady Harriet invited them both for a long visit to Bay House, near Alverstoke in Hampshire. They went in the middle of November and remained till the end of the year. Carlyle, to some moderate extent, seems to have enjoyed himself—certainly his wife did not.

During the middle of their stay he wrote to his brother:—

December 1, 1845.

We live here in the most complete state of Do-nothingism that I have ever in my life had experience of. The day goes along in consulting how the day shall go. For most part I snatch an effectual ride upon my strong horse out of the

whirlpool. I read a little German with the lady after dinner, listen to some music, to much witty talk, and that is all. I seem to improve in health a little, but still do not sleep. The habit of utter idleness getting possession of me is very strange. How long we shall be able to stand such a regimen is not made out. One would think not very long! The prospect of such a thing *for life* was absolutely equal to death. Meanwhile it cannot but be said to be pleasant enough, and perhaps not useless for a season.

To Mrs. Carlyle the visit was neither pleasant nor useful, probably the opposite of both.

Six weeks (she wrote to her friend Mrs. Russell when it was over) I have been doing absolutely nothing but playing at battledore and shuttlecock, chess, talking nonsense, and getting rid of a certain fraction of this mortal life as cleverly and uselessly as possible. Nothing could exceed the sumptuosity and elegance of the whole thing, nor its uselessness. Oh dear me! I wonder why so many people wish for high position and great wealth when it is such an open secret to what all that amounts in these days; merely to emancipating people from all the practical difficulties which might teach them the facts of things and sympathy with their fellow-creatures. This Lady Harriet Baring whom we have just been staying with is the cleverest woman out of sight that I ever saw in my life—and I have seen all our distinguished authoresses. Moreover she is full of energy and sincerity, and has, I am sure, an excellent heart. Yet so perverted has she been by the training and lifelong humouring incident to her high position, that I question if in her whole life she has done as much for her fellow-creatures as my mother in one year; or whether she will ever break through the cobwebs she is entangled in so as to be any other than the most

amusing and graceful woman of her time. The sight of such a woman should make one very content with one's own trials, even when they feel to be rather hard.[1]

Mrs. Buller was turning out a true prophet. Mrs. Carlyle and Lady Harriet did not suit each other. Mrs. Carlyle did not shut her eyes to the noble lady's distinguished qualities: but even these qualities themselves might be an obstacle to cordial intimacy. People do not usually take to those who excel in the points where they have themselves been accustomed to reign supreme. Mrs. Carlyle knew that she was far cleverer than the general run of lady adorers who worshipped her husband. She knew also that he was aware of her superiority; that, by her talent as well as her character, she had a hold upon him entirely her own, and that he only laughed good-naturedly at the homage they paid him. But she could not feel as easy about Lady Harriet. She saw that Carlyle admired her brilliancy, and was gratified by her queenly esteem. To speak of jealousy in the ordinary sense would be extravagantly absurd; but there are many forms of jealousy, and the position of a wife, when her husband is an intimate friend of another woman, is a difficult and delicate one. If there is confidence and affection between the ladies themselves, or if the friend has a proper perception of a wife's probable susceptibilities, and is careful to prevent them from being wounded, or if the wife herself is indifferent and incapable of resentment, all is well, and the relation may be delightful. In the present case there were none of these conditions. No one could

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 361.

suspect Lady Harriet Baring of intending to hurt Mrs. Carlyle; but either she never observed her discomfort, or she thought it too ridiculous to notice. She doubtless tried in her own lofty way to be kind to Mrs. Carlyle, and Mrs. Carlyle, for her husband's sake, tried to like Lady Harriet. But it did not answer on either side, and in such cases it is best to leave things to take their natural course. When two people do not agree, it is a mistake to force them into intimacy. They should remain on the footing of neutral acquaintance, and are more likely to grow into friends the less the direct effort to make them so. Gloriana may have a man for a subject without impairing his dignity—a woman in such a position becomes a dependent. Carlyle unfortunately could not see the distinction. To such a lady a certain homage seemed to be due; and if his wife resisted, he was angry. When Lady Harriet required her presence, she told John Carlyle that she was obliged to go, or the lady would quarrel with her, 'and that meant a quarrel with her husband.'[1] The Red Cross Knight was brought to evil thoughts of his 'Una' by the enchantments of Archimage. To a proud fiery woman like Mrs. Carlyle the sense that Lady Harriet could come in any way between her husband and herself was intolerable.

Things had not come to this point during the Bay House visit, but were tending fast in that direction, and were soon to reach it.

In February 1846 a new edition was needed of the 'Cromwell.' Fresh letters of Oliver had been sent

[1] Undated letter of Mrs. Carlyle to John Carlyle. See vol. ii. p. 93.

which required to be inserted according to date; a process, Carlyle said, 'requiring one's most excellent talent, as of shoe-cobbling, really that kind of talent carried to a high pitch.'

He had 'to unhoop his tub, which already held water,' as he sorrowfully put his case to Mr. Erskine, 'and insert new staves.'

To T. Erskine.

Feb. 28, 1846.

I must not complain; I am bound to rejoice rather: but I did not so much need the new money I am to get; and I can honestly say the feeling of faithfulness to a hero's great memory and to my own small task in regard to that is nearly the only consideration that practically weighs with me. The unmusical or musical voice of critics, totally ignorant of the matter for most part, and of most insincere nature at any rate, gives me little pain and little pleasure any more. We shall be dead soon, and then it is only the fact of our work that will speak for us through all eternity. One thing I do recognize with much satisfaction, that the general verdict of our poor loose public seems to be that Oliver *was* a genuine man, and if so, surely to them a very surprising one. It will do them much good, poor bewildered blockheads, to understand that no great man was ever other; that this notion of theirs about 'Machiavelism,' 'Policy,' and so forth, is on the whole what one might call blasphemous—a real doctrine of devils.

The Barings were at Addiscombe in the spring, and it was arranged that Mrs. Carlyle should be with them there for the benefit of country air; he remaining at his work, but joining them on Saturdays and Sundays.

She could not sleep, she did not like it. He who had meant everything for the best, tried to comfort her as well as he could.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Addiscombe.

Chelsea: April 8.

A considerable gap is made in the 'Cromwell' rubbish. It is fast disappearing before me. Heigho! but my existence is not now so haggard as it was for some days past. The sun is shining, the work going on all day. One has many sad reflections, but they are not unprofitable wholly, nor the worse for being sad. 'No man can help another,' sighed the melancholy Pestalozzi, which is but partly true. A kind and trustful word is very helpful from one to another. Oh, my poor Goody, let us endeavour to *be* wise and just and good! Nothing more is required of mortals. That is a fact one forgets sometimes. I am very sorry to hear of you 'pitted against Chaos' all night, and coming off second best. My poor little woman! But you will be home again soon. I will at least try to help you against Chaos, now and henceforth as heretofore. I will do my best in that. For one thing, I really wish you could find an eligible house somewhere, out under the quiet sky, removed fairly from these tumults and loud-braying discords of every kind, which it is growing really horrible and miserable to me to spend the remnant of my days among. 'Like living in a madhouse,' as the lady says. Truly so, and one has nothing to do with it either.

Evidently he was labouring at his task under complications of worry and trouble. Perhaps both he and she would have been better off after all at Craigenputtock. The 'stitching and cobbling,' however, was gone through with. 'Cromwell' thus enlarged was now

in its final form; and as soon as it was done, he took a step in connection with it which, I believe, he never took before or after with any of his writings: he presented a copy of it to the Prime Minister. Sir Robert Peel had hitherto been no favourite of his, neither Peel nor any one of the existing generation of statesmen; Sir Jabesh Windbag in 'Past and Present' representing his generic conception of them. But Peel was now repealing the Corn-laws; not talking of it, but doing it; and imperilling in one righteous act his own political fortune. That had something of greatness in it, especially with Carlyle, who had believed heroic sacrifice of self to be an impossible virtue in a Parliamentary leader. He discovered Peel to be a real man; and he sent his 'Cromwell' to him with the following letter:—

Chelsea: June 18, 1846.

Sir,—Will you be pleased to accept from a very private citizen of the community this copy of a book which he has been occupied in putting together, while you, our most conspicuous citizen, were victoriously labouring in quite other work? Labour, so far as it is true, and sanctionable by the Supreme Worker and World Founder, may claim brotherhood with labour. The great work and the little are alike definable as an extricating of the true from its imprisonment among the false; a victorious evoking of order and fact from disorder and semblance of fact. In any case, citizens who feel grateful to a citizen are permitted and enjoined to testify that feeling each in such manner as he can. Let this poor labour of mine be a small testimony of that sort to a late great and valiant labour of yours, and claim reception as such.

The book, should you ever find leisure to read and master

it, may perhaps have interest for you—may perhaps—who knows?—have admonition, exhortation, in various ways instruction and encouragement for yet other labours which England, in a voiceless but most impressive manner, still expects and demands of you. The authentic words and actings of the noblest governor England ever had may well have interest for all governors of England; may well be, as all Scripture is, as all genuine words and actings are, 'profitable'—profitable for reproof, for correction, and for edifying and strengthening withal. Hansard's Debates are not a kind of literature I have been familiar with; nor indeed is the arena they proceed from much more than a distress to me in these days. Loud-sounding clamour and rhetorical vocables grounded not on fact, nor even on belief of fact, one knows from of old whither all that and what depends on it is bound. But by-and-by, as I believe, all England will say what already many a one begins to feel, that whatever were the spoken unveracities of Parliament, and they are many on all hands, lamentable to gods and men, here has a great veracity been *done* in Parliament, considerably our greatest for many years past—a strenuous, courageous, and needful thing, to which all of us that so see it are bound to give our loyal recognition and furtherance as we can.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obliged fellow-citizen and obedient servant,

T. CARLYLE.[1]

Peel answered:—

Whitehall: June 22, 1840.

Sir,—Whatever may have been the pressure of my public

[1] There are two versions of this letter among Carlyle's papers, not quite identical; I do not know which was sent. The differences are unimportant, except to show that the letter was carefully composed.

engagements, it has not been so overwhelming as to prevent me from being familiar with your exertions in another department of labour, as incessant and severe as that which I have undergone.

I am the better enabled, therefore, to appreciate the value of your favourable opinion; and to thank you, not out of mere courtesy, but very sincerely, for the volumes which you have sent for my acceptance; most interesting as throwing a new light upon a very important chapter of our history; and gratifying to me as a token of your personal esteem.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

T. Carlyle, Esq. ROBERT PEEL.

The success of this book had been a real enjoyment to Carlyle—enjoyment in the true noble sense—he felt that he had done a good work, and had done it effectively.

To T. Erskine.

Chelsea: July 11, 1846.

The second edition of 'Cromwell' which has kept me sunk all spring and summer in a very ignoble kind of labour, is now off my hands for ever. The lively interest the people have taken in that heavy book—the numbers that read, and in some good measure understand something of it; all this is really surprising to me. I take it as one other symptom of the rapidly deepening seriousness of the public mind, which certainly has call enough to be serious at present. The conviction, too, among all persons of much moment seems to be pretty unanimous, that this is actually the history of Oliver; that the former histories of him have been extraordinary mistakes—very fallacious histories—as

of a man walking about for two centuries in a *universal masked ball* (of hypocrites and their hypocrisies spoken and done), with a mask upon him, this man, which no cunningest artist could get off. They tried it now this way, now that: still the mask was felt to remain: the mask would not come off. At length a lucky thought strikes us. This man *is in his natural face*. That is the mask of this one! Of all which I am heartily glad. In fact, it often strikes me as the fellest virulence of all the misery that lies upon us in these distracted generations, this blackest form of *incredulity* we have all fallen into, that great men, too, were paltry shuffling Jesuits, as we ourselves are, and meant nothing true in their work, or mainly meant lies and hunger in their work, even as we ourselves do. There will never be anything but an *enchanted* world, till that baleful phantasm of the pit be chased thither again, and very sternly bidden abide there. Alas! alas! It often seems to me as if poor Loyola and that *world* Jesuitry of which he is the sacrament and symbol, was the blackest, most godless spot in the whole history of Adam's posterity: a solemn wedding together in God's high name of truth and falsehood—as if the two were now one flesh and could not subsist apart—whereby, as some one now says, we are all become Jesuits, and the falsity of them has, as it were, obtained its apotheosis and is henceforth a consecrated falsity.

My wife went off a few days ago to Lancashire. She had been in a very weakly way ever since our summer heats came on, had much need of quiet and fresh air. . . . I, too, am tattered and fretted into great sorrow of heart; but that is partly the nature of the beast, I believe—that will be difficult to cure in this world.

CHAPTER XIV.

A.D. 1846-7. ÆT. 51-52.

Domestic confusions—Two letters from Mazzini—Mrs. Carlyle at Seaforth—Clouds which will not disperse—Gloriana—Tour with the Barings in Dumfriesshire—Moffat and its attraction—Carlyle at Scotsbrig.

It was hard on Carlyle that, while engaged with work into which he was throwing his entire heart and soul, he should be disturbed and perplexed with domestic confusions. But it was his fate—a fate, perhaps, which could not be avoided; and those confusions were to grow and gather into a thick black cloud which overshadowed his life for many weary years. When Mrs. Carlyle returned to him from Addiscombe, it was, as she said, 'with a mind all churned to froth'—not a pleasant condition. Carlyle, in spite of his good resolutions, was occasionally 'a little ill-haired.' At last things went utterly awry. She set off alone to the Paulets at the beginning of July. There was a violent scene when they parted. Her words, if seldom smoother than oil, were 'very swords' when she was really angry. She did not write on her arrival, as she had promised to do, and she drew these sad lines from him in consequence:—

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Seaforth.

Chelsea: July 6, 1846.

My Dear,—I hope it is only displeasure or embarrassed estrangement from me, and not any accident or illness of

your own, that robs me of a note this morning. I will not torment myself with that new uneasiness. But you did expressly promise to announce your arrival straightway. This is not good: but perhaps an unfriendly or miserable letter would have been worse, so I will be as patient as I can. Certainly we never parted before in such a manner; and all for—literally nothing. But I will not enter upon that at all. Composure and reflection at a distance from all causes of irritation or freaks of diseased fancy will show us both more clearly what the God's truth of the matter *is*. May God give us strength to follow piously and with all loyal fidelity what that is!

On coming home on Saturday in miserable enough humour, the saddest I think I have been in for ten years and more, I directly got out my work and sate down to it, as the one remedy I had. Yesterday I suppose you fancied me happy at Addiscombe. Alas! I was in no humour for anything of that laughing nature. I sate digging all day in the rubbish heaps, &c. It was a day of the resurrection of all sad and great and tender things within me—sad as the very death, yet not unprofitable, I believe. Adieu, dearest—for that *is*, and if madness prevail not may for ever be, your authentic title. Be quiet; do not doubt of me—do not yield to the enemy of us all, and may God bless thee always.

T. C.

Among Mrs. Carlyle's papers are two letters—the first of them dated only July, yet in answer to one which she must have written before leaving London, showing that in her distress she had taken the strong step of consulting a friend on the course which she ought to follow. Happily she could have consulted no one who could have advised her more wisely.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

London: July, 1846.

My dear Friend,—I was yesterday almost the whole day out, and did not receive your notes, except in the evening, when it was too late to answer them. Your few words sound sad, deeply, I will not say irreparably sad; and the worst of it is that none can help you but yourself. It is only you who can, by a calm, dispassionate, fair re-examination of the past, send back to nothingness the ghosts and phantoms that you have been conjuring up. It is only you who can teach yourself that, whatever the *present* may be, you must front it with dignity, with a clear perception of all your duties, with a due reverence to your immortal soul, with a religious faith in times yet to come, that are to dawn under the approach of other cloudless suns. I could only point out to you the fulfilment of duties which can make life—not happy—what can? but earnest, sacred, and resignated;[1] but I would make you frown or scorn. We have a different conception of life, and are condemned here down to walk on two parallels. Still it is the feeling of those duties that saves me from the atheism of despair, and leads me through a life every day more barren and burdensome, in a sort of calm composed manner—such, I repeat, as the consciousness of something everlasting within us claims from every living mortal. For I now most coolly and deliberately do declare to you, that partly through what is known to you, partly through things that will never be known, I am carrying a burden even heavier than you, and have undergone even bitterer deceptions than you have. But by dint of repeating to myself that there is no happiness under the moon, that life is a self-sacrifice meant for some higher and happier thing: that to have a few loving beings, or if none, to have a

[1] Mazzini's English, generally excellent, slips occasionally in a word.

mother watching you from Italy or from Heaven, it is all the same, ought to be quite enough to preserve us from falling, and by falling, parting. I have mustered up strength to go on, to work at my task as far as I have been able to make it out, till I reach the grave; the grave for which the hour will come, and is fast approaching without my loudly calling for it.

Awake, arise, dear friend! Beset by pain or not, we must go on with a sad smile and a practical encouragement from one another. We have something of our own to care about, something godlike that we must not yield to any living creature, whoever it be. Your life proves an empty thing, you say! Empty! Do not blaspheme. Have you never done good? Have you never loved? Think of your mother, and do good—set the eye to Providence. It is not as a mere piece of irony that God has placed you here; not as a mere piece of irony that He has given us those aspirations, those yearnings after happiness that are now making us both unhappy. Can't you trust Him a little longer? How long will you remain at Seaforth? Does he himself propose to go anywhere? I was coming to see you on Saturday. Write if and when it does good even homœopathically to you, and be assured that to me it will always do.

Ever yours,

JOSEPH MAZZINI.

Either this letter or her own reflections led Mrs. Carlyle, after a day's delay, to write softly to her husband. He, poor man, as innocent of any thought of wrong, as incapable of understanding what he had done to raise such a tornado, as my Uncle Toby himself could have been, was almost piteously grateful.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Seaforth.

Chelsea: July 7.

Thousand thanks, dear Goody, for thy good little letter! It has lifted a mountain from my poor inner man. Oh, if you could see *there* the real fact of the thing; verily, it would all be well. It would indeed—as by God's blessing it shall yet be, and so let us say not a word more of it; but pray earnestly from our very inmost heart that we *may* be enabled to do all that is true and good, and be helpful, not hindersome to one another; and in spite of our anomalous lot be found as wise ones, not as foolish. For *thy* great unwearied goodness, and true ever-watchful affection, mixed as it is with human infirmity, oh, my dearest, woe to me for ever if I could forget it or be in any way unjust to it! But let us say nothing. Let us each try to see, try to do, better always and better; and one thing does remain ever dear to me, ever sure for both of us. No honourable, truly good, and noble thing we do or have done for one another, but *will* bear its good fruit. That is as true as truth itself—a faith that should never fail us.

On July 13 he wrote, enclosing his never-forgotten birthday present.

I send thee a poor little card-case, a small memorial of Bastille day, and of another day also very important to me and thee. My poor little Jeannie! no heart ever wished another more truly 'many happy returns;' or, if 'happy returns' are not in our vocabulary, then 'wise returns,' wise and true and brave, which, after all, are the only 'happiness,' as I conjecture, that we have any right to look for in this segment of eternity that we are traversing together, thou and I. God bless thee, and know thou always,

in spite of the chimæras and illusions, that thou art dearer to me than any earthly creature. That *is* a fact, if it can be of any use to thy poor soul to know; and so accept my little gift and kiss it as I have done, and say, in the name of Heaven it shall yet all be well, and my poor husband *is* the man I have always known him from of old, is and will be.

This is the letter of which she speaks so touchingly in her reply,[1] the letter which had been delayed at the Seaforth post-office. She, agitated by a thousand thoughts, had feared that he had let the day pass without writing to her, and had been thrown into a 'tumult of wretchedness.' She had written again, it appears, to Mazzini; for from him, too, came another letter, tenderly sympathetic, yet wise and supremely honourable to him. No ghostly confessor could have been more judicious.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Seaforth.

July 15.

My dear Friend,—I could not write yesterday, as I intended, on account of the death of Scipioni Petrucci's wife. . . . Yes; 'sad as death, but not basely sad.' That is what you must be, what I want you to be, and what a single moment of truly earnest thought and faith will cause you to be. Pain and joy, deception and fulfilled hopes are just, as I often said, the rain and the sunshine that must meet the traveller on his way. Bless the Almighty if He has thought proper to send the latter to you. Button or wrap your cloak around you against the first, but do not think a single moment that the one or the other have anything to do with the *end* of your journey. You know that; but you want the

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. i. p. 367.

faith that would give you strength to fulfil the task shown by the intellect. These powers will give you that too, if you properly apply to them—affection, a religious belief, and the dead. You have affection for me, as I have for you: you would not shake mine? You would not add yourself to the temptations haunting me to wreck and despair? You would not make me worse than I am by your example, by your showing yourself selfish and materialist? You believe in God. Don't you think, after all, that this is nothing but an ephemeral trial; and that He will shelter you at the journey's end under the wide wing of his paternal love? You had, have, though invisible to the eyes of the body, your mother, your father too. Can't you commune with them? I know that a single moment of true fervent love for them will do more for you than all my talking! Were they now what you call living, would you not fly to them, hide your head in their bosom and be comforted, and feel that you owe to them to be strong—that they may never feel ashamed of their own Jane? Why, can you think them to be *dead*, gone for ever, their loving immortal soul annihilated? Can you think that this vanishing for a time has made you less responsible to them? *Can you, in a word, love them less because they are far from sight?* I have often thought that the arrangement by which loved and loving beings are to pass through death is nothing but the last experiment appointed by God to human love; and often, as you know from me, I have felt that a moment of true soul-communing with my dead friend was opening a source of strength for me unhoped for, here down. Did we not often agree about these glimpses of the link between ours and the superior life? Shall we now begin to disagree? Be strong then, and true to those you loved, and proud, nobly proud in the eyes of those you love or esteem. Some of them are deeply, silently suffering, but needing strength too, needing

it perhaps from you. Get up and work; do not set yourself apart from us. When the Evil One wanted to tempt Jesus, he led Him into a solitude.

Believe me, my dear friend, ever yours,

JOSEPH MAZZINI.

The birthday present, and the words which had come with it, ought to have made all well; and yet it did not, for the cause remained. The condition into which she had wrought herself through her husband's Gloriana worship would have been ridiculous if it had not been so tragic—tragic even in its absurdity, and tragic in its consequences. Fault there was little on any side. Want of judgment, perhaps, and want of perception; that was all. Carlyle had formed an acquaintance which he valued and she disliked, because she fancied that a shadow had risen between herself and him, which was taking from her part of what belonged to her. A few hearty words, a simple laugh, and the nightmare would have vanished. But neither laugh nor spoken word of any such salutary kind had been possible. Carlyle in such matters had no more skill than the Knight of La Mancha would have had. He was very shy, for one thing. He wrote with exquisite tenderness. In conversation he shrank from expressions of affection, even at moments when he felt most deeply. On the other hand, he was keenly sensitive to what he thought unreasonable or silly. He was easily provoked; and his irritation would burst out in spurts of angry metaphor, not to be forgotten from their very point and force. Thus his letters failed in producing their full effect from their contrast with

remembered expressions which had meant nothing; while, again, he might himself naturally feel impatient when called on to abandon friends whose high character he admired, and who had been singularly kind to him, for a cause which he knew to be a preposterous creation of a disordered fancy, and which, in yielding, he would have acknowledged tacitly to have been just. A 'man of genius,' especially one whose function it was to detect and expose chimæras, ought to have contrived better. Some strange mismanagement there must have been to have created such a condition of things. Yet 'a man of genius' is no better off in such situations than an ordinary mortal. He was confronted with a problem which a person with a thousandth fraction of his abilities, either of brain or heart, would have solved in a moment by a smile; yet he wandered from mistake to mistake. He continued to argue with his 'bewildered Goody.'

Do not (he wrote), oh, do not fret thyself in that way about nothing at all! In thy tragic sorrows and black confusions there is a noble element peering through, a gleam of something divine and true, which is *worth* following. By God's blessing we shall yet look back on all those miserable things, and find that a blessing beyond price did lie in them. Be still! Oh, be still! and do not fret thyself for any cobweb or brainweb!

This was very well; yet in the same letter he had to tell her that a plan had been arranged for the Barings to go to the Highlands, that it had been proposed that he should accompany them, that he did not think he would, but that possibly he might.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Chelsea: July 18.

I was at the Barings' last night, saw Buller, &c. I do not go to Addiscombe to-day nor to-morrow, nor indeed, for an indefinite, perhaps infinite, time to come. To the lady I have, of course, told nothing, except that you are very unwell. But she seems to have discerned pretty clearly for herself that our intercourse is to be carried on under different conditions henceforth, or probably to cease altogether before long: to which arrangement she gives signs of being ready to conform with fully more indifference than I expected; with no unkindness at all; but with no discernible regret either; on the whole, with the most perfect politeness and graceful conformity to destiny, such as becomes all people —such as I, too, am ready for, if it come to that. That perversity of fate, too, I can adopt or accept as I have had to do a few in my time. An opening is left for my meeting them about Carlisle or Edinburgh on their Scotch tour; but it seems to be with little expectation on either side that it will take effect. We shall endeavour to see what the real monition of the matter is when the time arrives.

Again:—

July, 22.

I took leave of the Barings last night. All is handsome and clear there, and nothing is wrong; except *your* and my ill-genius may still force it to be so a little. To the lady I 'said' simply nothing; and her altered manner, I suppose, might proceed altogether from the evident chagrin and depression of mine. Was that unnatural in me? In fact, I myself was heartily weary of a relation grown so sad, and in my mind almost repented that it had ever been. But you

may take it as a certainty, if you like, that there is no unkindness or injustice harboured to you there; and if you chose to write a little word of news to Lady Harriet, as to how you are and what things you are amidst, I do believe it would be a real and very welcome kindness to her. Her intents towards you and towards me, so far as I can read them, *are* charitable and *not* wicked. My relation to her is by a very *small* element in her position, but by a just and laudable one, and I wish to retain that if I can, and give it up if I cannot. *Voilà tout!* Oh, Goody dear! be wise, and all is well.

He was struggling in a cobweb, and was not on the way to extricate himself. That a man of genius should enjoy the society of a brilliant and gifted lady of high rank was 'just and laudable,' as he called it. It was natural, too, if not laudable, that Mrs. Carlyle should not be equally interested in a person who rivalled her in her own domain. She, for her own part, had no wish to be intimate with a great lady who could have no interest in her. Carlyle made the mistake of trying to force her into a position which she detested; and every step which he took in this direction only made the irritation greater.

His plans for the summer had been laid out independent of the Highland tour. He was to go first to his mother at Scotsbrig for a few days, and afterwards to run across to Ireland. The 'Young Ireland' movement, the precursor of the Home Rule movement, was just then rising into heat. Charles Gavan Duffy, of the 'Nation' newspaper, with others of the leaders, had sought him out in London in consequence of what

he had written in 'Chartism' about Irish misgovernment. He had promised to go over, when he had leisure, and see what they were doing. Had he confined himself to this programme, he would have given time for the waves to go down; but he went for a day or two to see his wife at Seaforth on his way to Scotland. It then appeared that he had engaged to meet the Barings after all, and that Mrs. Carlyle herself was pressed to join their party. His letters after he reached Scotsbrig show that the barometer was still at 'stormy.'

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Seaforth.

Scotsbrig: August 8, 1846.

My poor old mother met me once again on the *Close* here, with a moist radiance of joy in her old eyes: once again—not many times more—perhaps never once more: and then it is all done, and that part of the universal destiny is for me also complete. It is not a merry place this world—it is a stern and awful place. Soon after my arrival, I flung myself upon a bed and fell fast asleep. I am very unwell, so far as biliary and other confusions go. Yesterday I did not sleep long, and to-day I awoke at four o'clock. Deep silence and some friendly pillow, watched by some *victorious* loving one, to lay my head on, that was the thing for me, and that is not to be had here. The loving ones here are all *un*victorious too. I do not remember a more miserable set of hours for most part than those since I left you. But we will hope for a good issue out of them too—nay, believe in it, and manfully strive with our best strength for it. That will do something. That will do instead of all. Oh, my dearest, how little I *can* make thee know of me! In what a black

baleful cloud for myself and thee are all our affairs involved to thy eyes, at this moment threatening shipwreck if we do not mind!

There will clearly be no continuing for me here beyond a very few days. Jack has adjusted himself into the direction of all the mechanism of this house, and there is not room for both of us at all. I cannot hope for more than to get along without offence till I do the indispensably necessary, and then fly elsewhither to look for shelter; back to Chelsea, I sometimes think. But, indeed, to-day I am below par in my dispiritment, as of a *hanged* man—one of the 'weal wight men' that sing after they are hanged. Courage, courage! I say, we will not surrender to the Devil yet—we will defy him yet, and do the best we can to set our foot on the throat of him yet. . . .

My mother enters with a message for kind remembrances to you—emphatic earnest message, evidently far sincerer than such almost ever are. Poor old woman! she said yesterday, 'Does Jane never mean to see us again, then, at all?' To-day she repeats in other form the same sad thought, as sad, and kind, and truly affectionate, I do believe, as dwells in any heart but my own for you at present. . . . You will tell me about Haddington[1] when your resolution on it is once clear. I shall be ready at the end of next week—sooner, if the Barings, warned by these thunders and rains, decide on *not* coming. How incredible is it to my poor little Jeannie, and yet how certain in fact, that an intimation to that effect would be among the *gladdest* I could get in a small way during these days! I will write to the lady to-morrow that I am here according to engagement, but of invitation to her I cannot have much. This too, by God's blessing, what of integrity and propriety there was in all this will one day

[1] They were to have gone to Haddington together.

become clear to all parties. Oh, to think that my affection for *thee!*—but I will not speak on that thing at present. Adieu, my own Jane, whom nothing can divide from *me*. God bless thee ever!

T. CARLYLE.

For several days no answer at all came from Mrs. Carlyle, and he grew impatient.

What am I to make (he asked) of this continued silence? It surely is not fair. Write to me as briefly as you like—but write. There can be no propriety in punishing me by such feelings as *these* are. It is like seething a kid in its mother's milk. If I cared less about you, the punishment would be less. It is not fair nor right. What thoughts I have day and night I will not state at all till there come some means of getting belief to my words again. Oh, if you could look into my heart of hearts, I do not think you could be angry with me, or sorry for yourself either! May good angels instead of bad again visit you! May *I* soon meet you again, for I still think I can be your good angel if you will not too much obstruct me.

On the point of starting on August 14 to join his friends at Carlisle, he wrote again:—

No word from you yet: not the scrape of a pen this morning either. It is not right, my poor dear Jeannie! it is not just nor according to *fact*: and it deeply distresses and disturbs me who had no need of disturbance or distress otherwise, if all were well known to thee. But it is best that I suffer it with little commentary. To thee, also, I will believe it is no luxury. I said to myself last night, while tossing and tumbling amid thousandfold annoyances, outward and

inward, 'It is not fair all this—really it is not fair.' I wanted to do none any injury. My one wish and aim *was* to pass among them without hurting any, doing good to some if I could. My own lot has been but emptiness, and they all cry: 'See, thou hast taken something of mine!' The jackass brayed, or the horse neighed, or some of the children coughed, and roused me from these unprofitable reflections. Silence is better than most speech in the case. This, however, I will say and repeat: 'The annals of insanity contain nothing madder than "jealousy" directed against such a journey as I have before me to-day.' Believed or not, that is verily a fact. To the deepest bottom of my heart that I can sound, I find far other feelings, far other humours and thoughts at present than belong to 'jealousy' on your part. Alas! alas! I must, on the whole, allow the infernal deities to go *their* full swing: but madness shall not conquer, if all my saints can hinder it. Oh, my Jeannie! my own true Jeannie! bravest little life-companion, hitherto, into what courses are we tending? God assist us both, and keep us free of frightful Niagaras and temptations of Satan. I am indeed, very miserable. My mother asks: 'No word from Jane yet?' And, in spite of her astonishment, I am obliged to answer: '*None.*'

It is ludicrous to contrast with all this tempest the fate of the expedition which was the occasion of it. The projected tour with Mr. Baring and Lady Harriet lasted but five days, and was as melancholy as Mrs. Carlyle could have desired. They went from Carlisle to Moffat, sleeping 'in noisy cabins, in confused whisky inns,' and in the worst of weather. The lady was cross; Mr. Baring only patient and good-humoured. They had designed a visit to Drumlanrig: but 'the Buccleuch

household gave notice that they had the hooping-cough,' and were not to be approached; and Beattock, near Moffat, was the furthest point of the journey.

Beattock (Carlyle reported) was very bad. In blinks of fair weather we did tolerably well; but they were rare. During rain we had to sit in a little room where neither fire in the grate nor the smallest chink of ventilation otherwise could be permitted. One grew half distracted, naturally, in such an element, and prayed for fair weather as the alternative of suicide. The brave Baring's cheerfulness and calmness never failed him for a moment.

They had one fine day, which was given to Moffat and the neighbourhood, and then parted, the Barings to go on to the Highlands, Carlyle to retreat to Scotsbrig again—'to sleep, and practical sense, and the free use of tobacco,' and to prepare for his trip to Ireland. Mrs. Carlyle was in no spirits for Haddington, and returned alone to her own resting-place in Cheyne Row, after a day or two with Miss Jewsbury at Manchester. So the 'weighty matter,' which had called up such a storm, was over, and the gale had blown itself out. She, like a sensible woman, crushed down her own dissatisfaction. The intimacy was to go on upon whatever terms Carlyle pleased, and she resigned herself to take a part in it, since there was no reasonable cause to be alleged for cessation or interruption. But the wound fretted inwardly and would not heal. She and her husband had quarrelled often enough before —they had quarrelled and made it up again, for they had both hot tempers and sharp tongues—but there had been at bottom a genuine and hearty confidence

in each other, a strong sincere affection, resting on mutual respect and mutual admiration. The feeling remained essentially unbroken, but the fine edge of it had suffered. Small occasions of provocation constantly recurred. Mrs. Carlyle consented to stay with Lady Harriet and submit to her authority as often and as much as she required; the sense of duty acting as perpetual curb to her impatience. But the wound burst out at intervals, embittering Carlyle's life, and saddening a disposition which did not need further clouds upon it. She wrote to him while he was at Scotsbrig about indifferent things in the spirit of the resolution which she had made, and he, man-like, believed that all was well again.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: August 26, 1846.

My dear Goody,—I had thy letter yesterday, at last. Many thanks for it, and do not keep me waiting so long again. No news could be welcomer than that you have been recreating and improving your mind by assiduous inspection of the works and ways of Manchester—most welcome unexpected news. The black spider-webs that take possession of one's fancy, making one poor little heart and soul all one Golgotha and Egyptian darkness, are best of all to be sent about their business—home to the Devil, whose they are—by opening one's eyes to the concrete fact of human life in some such way as that. Oh, my Goody! my own dear little Jeannie! But we will hope all that black business has now got safe into the past, and will not tear up our poor forlorn existence in so sad a way again. God be thanked you are better; and now tell me that you eat a little food at

breakfast as well as dinner, and I will compose myself till we meet.

Total idleness still rules over me here. The brightest still autumn weather, blue skies, windless, with Noah's ark clouds hung over them, plenty of good tobacco, worthless Yankee literature, and many ruminations on the moor or Linn—that is all; the voice of the Devil's caldron singing me into really a kind of waking sleep. In spite of cocks, children, bulls, cuddies, and various interruptions at night, I victoriously snatch some modicum of real sleep for most part, and could certainly improve in health were a continuance of such scenes of quiet permitted me. But it is not. I must soon lift anchor again and go. . . . Jenny and my mother are this day *washing* with all their might, cleaning up my soiled duds for me.

August 29.

I lie totally inert here, like a dead dry bone bleaching in the silent sunshine. Often enough, my feeling of loneliness, of utter isolation in this universe, is great. Useful, I dare say. One requires, occasionally, to be somewhat severely taught. Abdallah, the Vizier, used to retire at intervals and contemplate the wooden clogs he had first started with, and found it do him good amid his vanities. Probably there may lie a little more work in me: nay, I think there will and shall. Complaint is not the dialect one should speak in. Courage! . . . I shall like better to fancy you in Chelsea, earthquaking and putting all in order, than tossing and tumbling as you now are. Home, therefore, is the word, and remember one thing, to write a little oftener to me, and as near the old tone as you can come to, before the spider-webs got upon the loom at all. In me is no change, nor was, nor is like to be. Alas! I do not much deserve to be loved by anybody—not much, or at all: but I

am very grateful if anybody will take the trouble to do it. God guide us all, for our pathway is sometimes intricate, and our own insight is now and then very bad. But there will come a day when all that will be intelligible again. I should be miserable if I thought there would not. Again, courage!

CHAPTER XV.

A.D. 1846-7. ÆT. 51-52.

Six days in Ireland—John Mitchel—Return to London—Margaret Fuller—Visit to the Grange—Irish famine—Dr. Chalmers—Literature as a profession—Matlock—Sight near Buxton—Visit to Rochdale—John and Jacob Bright—Emerson comes from America—The "Jew Bill"—Rowe's Life of Sterling—Plans for future books—Exodus from Houndsditch.

IRELAND had long been an anxious subject of Carlyle's meditations. It was the weak point of English constitutional government. The Constitution was the natural growth of the English mind and character. We had imposed it upon the Irish in the confident belief that a system which answered among ourselves must be universally excellent, and be equally suited for every other country and people. Carlyle's conviction was that even for England it was something temporary in itself, an historical phenomenon which in time would cease to answer its purpose even where it originated, and that Ireland was the weak spot, where the failure was first becoming evident. He had wished to see the unfortunate island with his own eyes, now particularly when its normal wretchedness was accentuated by the potato blight and famine. He had no present leisure for a detailed survey, but he had resolved at least to look at it if only for a few days.

On the last of August he left Scotsbrig, went to Dumfries, and thence made a hasty visit to Craigen-

puttock, which was now his own property, and where there was business to be attended to. From Dumfries he went by coach to Ayr and Ardrossan, from which a steamer carried him at night to Belfast. Gavan Duffy and John Mitchel had arranged to meet him at Drogheda. The drive thither from Belfast was full of instruction; the scene all *new* to him; the story of the country written in ruined cabins and uncultivated fields, the air loaded with the fatal smell of the poisoned potato. He had an agreeable companion on the coach in a clever young Dublin man, who pleased him well. Drogheda must have had impressive associations for him. There is no finer passage in his 'Cromwell' than his description of the stern business once enacted there. But he did not stay to look for traces of Oliver. He missed his two friends through a mistake at the Post Office, and hurried on by railway to Dublin, where he stopped at the Imperial Hotel in Sackville Street. Here for a day or two he was alone. He had come for a glance at Ireland, and that was all which he got. He witnessed, however, a remarkable scene, the last appearance of O'Connell, then released from prison, in Conciliation Hall. He says, long after:—

I saw Conciliation Hall and the last glimpse of O'Connell, chief quack of the then world; first time I had ever heard the lying scoundrel speak—a most melancholy scene to me altogether; Conciliation Hall something like a decent Methodist Chapel, but its audience very sparse, very bad and blackguard-looking; brazen faces like tapsters, tavern-keepers, miscellaneous hucksters, and quarrelsome male or female nondescripts the prevailing type; not one that you

would have called a gentleman, much less a man of culture; and discontent visible among them. The speech, on potato rot, most serious of topics, had not one word of sincerity, not to speak of wisdom, in it. Every sentence seemed to you a lie, and even to know that it was a detected lie. I was standing in the area in a small group of non-members and transitory people, quite near this Demosthenes of blarney, when a low voice whispered in high accent, 'Did you ever hear such damned nonsense in all your life?' It was my Belfast-Drogheda coach companion, and I thoroughly agreed with him. Beggarly O'Connell made out of Ireland straightway and never returned—crept under the Pope's petticoat to die (and be 'saved' from what he had merited), the eminently despicable and eminently poisonous professor of blarney that he was.

The young Irelanders had waited at Drogheda, and only discovered their guest at last at Dundrum, to which he had gone to some address which Mr. Duffy had given him. There he was entertained at a large dinner-party. 'Young Ireland almost in mass.' The novelist Carleton was there, 'a genuine bit of old Ireland.' 'They talked and drank liquids of various strengths.' Carlyle was scornful. The Young Irelanders fought fiercely with him for their own views; but they liked him and he liked them, wild and unhopeful as he knew their projects to be. He could not see even the surface of Ireland without recognising that there was a curse upon it of some kind, and these young enthusiasts were at least conscious of the fact, and were not crying 'Peace' when there was none. The next day he dined with one of them; then, perhaps, the most notorious.

Dined at Mitchel's (he writes) with a select party, and ate there the last truly good potato I have met with in the world. Mitchel's wife, especially his mother (Presbyterian parson's widow of the best Scotch type), his frugally elegant small house and table, pleased me much, as did the man himself, a fine elastic-spirited young fellow, whom I grieved to see rushing on destruction, palpable, by attack of windmills, but on whom all my persuasions were thrown away. Both Duffy and him I have always regarded as specimens of the best kind of Irish youth, seduced, like thousands of them in their early day, into courses that were at once mad and ridiculous, and which nearly ruined the life of both, by the big Beggarman who had 15,000*l.* a year, and, *proh pudor!* the favour of English Ministers, instead of the pillory from them, for professing blarney with such and still worse results.

'Poor Mitchel!' (Carlyle said afterwards) 'I told him he would most likely be hanged, but I told him too they could not hang the immortal part of him.'

On the last day of his stay he was taken for a drive, one of the most beautiful in the world, by the Dargle and Powerscourt, and round through the Glen of the Downs to Bray. Before entering the Dublin mountains, they crossed the low rich meadows of the old Pale, the longest in English occupation, a fertile oasis in the general wretchedness. I have heard that he said, looking over the thick green grass and well-trimmed fences and the herds of cattle fattening there, 'Ah, Duffy, there you see the hoof of the bloody Saxon.' This was his final excursion, a pleasant taste in the mouth to end with. The same evening his friends saw him on board the steamer at Kingstown; and in the early morning of September 10 he

was sitting smoking a cigar before the door of his wife's uncle's house in Liverpool till the household should awake and let him in.

He had looked on Ireland, and that was all; but he had seen enough to make intelligible to him all that followed. When he came again, three years later, the bubble had burst. Europe was in revolution; the dry Irish tinder had kindled, and a rebellion which was a blaze of straw had ended in a cabbage garden. Duffy, Mitchel, and others of that bright Dundrum party had stood at the bar to be tried for treason. Duffy narrowly escaped. The rest were exiled, scattered over the world, and lost to Ireland for ever. Mitchel has lately died in America. The 'immortal part' of him still works in the Phœnix Park and in dynamite conspiracies; what will come of it has yet to be seen.

To the family at Scotsbrig Ireland had been a word of terror, and Carlyle hastened to assure them of his safe return.

> Tell my dear mother (he wrote to his brother John) that the Papists have not hurt me in the least; on the contrary, they were abundantly and over-abundantly kind and hospitable to me, and many a rough object has been put in my head which may usefully smooth itself for me some day.

In London, when he was again settled there, he had nothing of importance to attend to. No fresh work had risen upon him. There had been trouble with servants, &c. The establishment at Cheyne Row consisted of a single maid-of-all-work, and to find a woman who would take such a place, and yet satisfy

a master and mistress so sensitive to disorder, material or moral, was no easy matter. Mrs. Carlyle has related her afflictions on this score; just then they had been particularly severe, and she had been worried into illness. The 'fame' from 'Cromwell' had made Carlyle himself a greater object of curiosity than ever. He did not like being an object of curiosity.

October 8, 1846.

Yesternight (he says) there came a bevy of Americans from Emerson, one Margaret Fuller, the chief figure of them, a strange lilting lean old maid, not nearly such a bore as I expected. Miss Martineau was here and is gone—to Norwich, after which to Egypt—broken into utter wearisomeness, a mind reduced to these three elements: Imbecility, Dogmatism, and Unlimited Hope. I never in my life was more heartily bored with any creature.

Margaret Fuller, then on her way to Italy to be married to a Count Ossoli there, and to be afterwards tragically drowned, has left an account of this meeting with Carlyle, and being an external view of him and by a clever woman, it deserves a place here. Her first evening at Cheyne Row, she says, 'delighted' her. Carlyle 'was in a very sweet humour, full of wit and pathos, without being overbearing and oppressive.' She was 'carried away with the rich flow of his discourse; and the hearty noble earnestness of his personal being brought back the charm which was once upon his writing before she wearied of it.' She admired his Scotch dialect, 'his way of singing his great full sentences so that each one was like the stanza of a narrative ballad.' 'He talked of the present state of things in

England, giving light witty sketches of the men of the day; and some sweet homely stories he told of things he had known among the Scotch peasantry. . . . There was never anything so witty as his description of ——. It was enough to kill one with laughing.' 'Nor was he ashamed to laugh himself when he was amused;' 'he went on in a cordial human fashion.'

On a second visit the humour was less sweet, though 'more brilliant,' and Miss Fuller was obliged to disagree with everything that he said.

The worst of hearing Carlyle (she says, and she is very correct in this) is that you cannot interrupt him. I understand the habit and power of haranguing have increased very much upon him, so that you are a perfect prisoner when he has once got hold of you. To interrupt him is a physical impossibility. If you get a chance to remonstrate for a moment, he raises his voice and bears you down. True he does you no injustice, and with his admirable penetration sees the disclaimer in your mind, so that you are not morally delinquent; but it is not pleasant to be unable to utter it.

This was not the last meeting, for the Carlyles in turn spent an evening with their new American acquaintances. Mazzini was there, whom Miss Fuller admired especially, and had perceived also to be 'a dear friend of Mrs. Carlyle.' 'Mazzini's presence,' she writes, 'turned the conversation to Progress and ideal subjects, and Carlyle was fluent in invectives on "rosewater imbecilities." Mazzini, after some efforts to remonstrate, became very sad.' Mrs. Carlyle said to Miss Fuller: 'These are but opinions to Carlyle; but to Mazzini, who has given his all, and helped to bring his friends to

the scaffold in pursuit of such objects, it is matter of life and death.'

All Carlyle's talk that evening (she goes on) was a defence of mere force, success the test of right. If people would not behave well, put collars round their necks. Find a hero, and let them be his slaves. It was very Titanic and Anticelestial. I wish the last evening had been more melodious. However, I bade Carlyle farewell with feelings of the warmest friendship and admiration. We cannot feel otherwise to a great and noble nature, whether it harmonise with one's own or not. I never appreciated the work he has done for his age till I saw England—I could not. You must stand in the shadow of that mountain of Shams to know how hard it is to cast light across it.

Cheyne Row being made uncomfortable by change of servants, an invitation to Carlyle and his wife to stay at the Grange was accepted without objection on either side. Objections on that score were not to be raised any more. Mrs. Carlyle liked old Lord and Lady Ashburton well, and the Grange was one of the pleasantest houses in England. But it proved to be one of the great autumn gatherings which were a mere reproduction of London society. The visit lasted a fortnight, and gave little pleasure to either of them. The men were shooting all day; the women dispersed to their rooms in the forenoon, met at luncheon, strolled or rode in the afternoon; none of them *did* anything, and Carlyle was a fish out of water. He says:—

It was a strange nightmare of smoke and flame, indigestion and Do-nothingism, which I was very willing to see end.

We had many people there, nearly all insignificant except by their manners and rank. Old Rogers stayed the longest, indeed as long as ourselves. I do not remember any old man (he is now eighty-three) whose manner of living gave me less satisfaction. A most sorrowful, distressing, distracted old phenomenon, hovering over the rim of deep eternities with nothing but light babble, fatuity, vanity, and the frostiest London wit in his mouth. Sometimes I felt as if I could throttle him, the poor old wretch! but then suddenly I reflected 'it is but for two days more.' Pity the sorrows of a poor old man! Lady Harriet lived mostly in her own apartments, dined at another hour than we, and, except at breakfast and tea, did not much appear.

The Grange was Lord Ashburton's, his son, Mr. Baring, and Lady Harriet living (as has been seen), when not in London or Addiscombe, at Bay House, near Alverstoke. Mrs. Carlyle, after the Grange visit, became very ill, confined to bed for three weeks with cough and incessant headache. The new servant did not understand her business. Carlyle himself was '*totally idle*, trying merely to read books, and the books a disgust to him.' Lady Harriet, when Mrs. Carlyle became able to move, proposed that she and her husband should spend a month with her at Bay House for change of air. Mr. Baring had many engagements, and for part of the time she would be alone. Carlyle, writing to his brother about it, said 'that he did not regard this scheme as quite unquestionable, and so had rather held back, but Jane having engaged for it would go through with the affair.' Lady Harriet was most attentive; she secured them a separate compartment on the railway. Her carriage was waiting at the station with rugs,

wrappings, and hot-water bottles. They went in the middle of January. On the 28th Carlyle wrote:—

We have terribly windy weather here, otherwise genial and of mild temperature. We are doing very tolerably well. In the end of last week Jane took sore throat, and for three days she had a very bad time of it; but now the disorder is quite gone, and she is visibly better than before for a long time past. I myself do little reading, little of anything, rove about in silence among the whins and shingle beaches here, and I suppose shall get profit in the long run.

February brought other visitors, Buller, Milnes, &c. Lady Anne Charteris, who lived near Bay House, came often to sit with Mrs. Carlyle and play chess with her. On the 15th, when the month was near out, he could send a good account to his mother.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Bay House: Feb. 15, 1847.

Jane has greatly improved in health; indeed she is now about as well as usual, and we hope may now do well henceforth. I myself expect if we were home again to feel somewhat better. Certainly I ought to be so: for I have gone *bone idle* these four weeks and more, and have been well done to every way. But the great tumult of servants and equipments here considerably confuses me always while it lasts. . . . I have passed great part of my time *alone*, wandering in silence by the shore of the sea, or among the shallow lanes up and down, which is not an unprofitable thing either in its course. The memory of many things which it were not good at all to forget rises with strange clearness on me in these solitudes, very touching, very sad, out of the depths of

the old dead years. Oh! my dear old mother, what a stupendous thing is this human life, that we live in many cases as if it were of no consequence! When I think of those old dear ones that are with God, and how we shall all soon be there ourselves, I have no word to say.[1]

Ireland weighed heavily on his thoughts. Each post brought news this spring of a land stricken with death. He had seen the place, and could realise what was passing there. Tens of thousands were perishing, and the wretched people, having lost their potatoes, were refusing even to plough. 'Why,' they asked, 'should they raise a crop, when the landlords would come and take it all?' The Government would be obliged to feed them, whether they worked or not. 'Never,' he cried, 'was there such a scene as Ireland.' He longed to write something on it, but felt that he did not yet see through the problem. Nay, he believed an equal catastrophe lay over England herself, if she did not mend her ways. It was to this that he must next direct himself, when he could determine how; but there was no longer any immediate need to write anything. He would pause and consider. 'Frederick' was still far off, nearer subjects were more pressing.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: March 8, 1847.

In the way of putting pen to paper I am still altogether inactive, and decline every offer made to me by such poor hawkers as call on me by chance for that object; but in the way of sorting the abstruse confusions within my own self

[1] The remainder of this letter is missing.

(which I suppose is the first condition of writing to any purpose) I have plenty to do; and for doing it I find one good condition is to *hold your tongue*, if you can. Happily I now *can*. My poor books bring me in a little money now to fill the meal barrel every year, and the wealth of all the Bank of England is daily a smaller and smaller object to me; indeed it is long since well near no object at all, which is perhaps a very good definition of being extremely *rich*, the 'richest author in Britain' at present. I think I shall hold my tongue for a pretty while yet; and *then*, if I live, there will another word perhaps be found in me which I shall be obliged to speak—a terribly hard job when it comes. I read books, but seldom find any that contain what I want. Indeed, one's busiest time is often when altogether silent and quiescent, if one can stand to that rightly.

In a postscript to this letter he enclosed a five-pound note, part of which his mother was to give, if she liked, to 'Jenny' as a present from herself, that his sister might not feel too heavily obliged to him—one of his characteristic bits of fine delicacy. In return came hams, butter, &c., from Scotsbrig, unceasing and affectionate exchanges. The months went by. The season brought its usual distractions, but he stayed mostly at home.

London (he wrote on May 21) is an awful whirlpool this month, but we try to have but little to do with it—nothing for most part but a glimpse at it once a day, and a thankful return out of the noise and discord back to the river-side here, and to the sight of country fields and the company chiefly of books and one's own thoughts again. . . . We had a flying visit from Jeffrey last week. He has been in the

Isle of Wight and other regions hereabouts for health's sake. He was just then on his way for Edinburgh again, looking thin, but brisk enough, scarcely a little more *serious* as he grows older, in fact the same old man. We are always very happy with him for a little, but could not stand it *long*, I think, without coming upon innumerable points of discrepancy. A much more interesting visitor than Jeffrey was old Dr. Chalmers, who came down to us also last week, whom I had not seen before for, I think, five-and-twenty years. It was a pathetic meeting. The good old man is grown white-headed, but is otherwise wonderfully little altered—grave, deliberate, very gentle in his deportment, but with plenty too of soft energy: full of interest still for all serious things, full of real kindliness, and sensible even to honest mirth in a fair measure. He sate with us an hour and a half, went away with our blessings and affections. It is long since I have spoken to so *good* and really pious-hearted and beautiful old man.

Chalmers had never forgotten Carlyle, whom he had seen long before with Irving at Glasgow. He had watched his progress, recognised the essential piety of his nature under the forms of heterodoxy, and in 'Cromwell' had seen a noble addition to the worthy kind of English literature. He had gone to Cheyne Row to express his feelings, and look once more on Carlyle's face. Neither he nor his host guessed then how near he stood to the end of his pilgrimage.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: June 19, 1847.

I mentioned to you that Dr. Chalmers had seen us here for an hour one day, and how interesting it was. We thought

we had hardly ever seen a finer-looking old man, so peaceable, so hopeful, modest, pious. You have since heard of his sudden call from this world. I believe there is not in all Scotland, or all Europe, any such Christian priest left. It will long be memorable to us, the little visit we had from him. And O'Connell, too, the wretched blustering quack, is dead; died with his mouth full of superstitious nonsense, among other things. Unfortunate old man! on what side could he look with clearness of hope? He had been lying, as no good man ever does or did, openly for fifty years, preaching to the Irish that they were just about to get Repeal from the English and become a glorious people—being indeed noble men at bottom, though to all appearance blackguards and lying slaves—and he leaves them sinking into universal wreck, and nothing *but* their connection with England between the whole mass of them and black death. To him for one I will not raise a monument.

With the hot weather came a visit to Addiscombe—visits to the Barings, at one place or another, continually recurring, in which Mrs. Carlyle was as often as possible included. There is nothing to be said, save that Lady Harriet's attentions to her were unremitting. Carlyle himself was still what he called idle, *i.e.* incessantly reading all kinds of books, and watching the signs of the times. Of books freshly coming out he read, among others, Maurice's 'Religions of the World,' on which he wrote to Maurice with warm compliments. Another letter written this summer is worth quoting for the advice it contains to young men wishing to make literature their profession. Some stranger from Manchester had written to consult him. Having time on his hands, he sent this reply:—

Chelsea: July, 1847.

My dear Sir.—Unluckily it is not possible to answer your main inquiry. The incomes of literary men even of a high reputation vary, according as the men work for popularity by itself, or for other objects, from 4,000*l.* a year to perhaps 200*l.* or lower. Add to which that all such incomes are uncertain, fluctuating on the wildest chance, and that not one literary man in the hundred ever becomes popular or successful at all. You perceive it is like asking what may be the income of a man that shall decide to live by gambling. No answer to be given. Reporters to the daily papers, whose industry is the humblest of all real or *unservile* kinds in literature, receive, as I have heard, about 200*l.* a year. Perhaps, all things considered, a man of sense, reduced to live by writing, would decide that, in the economical respect, these men's position was actually the best. By quitting reality again, and taking in to some popular department of literary *rope-dancing*, a person of real toughness and assiduity, not ashamed to feel himself a slave, but able even to think himself *free* and a king in rope-dancing *well paid*, contrives, with moderate talent otherwise, if he be really tough and assiduous, to gain sometimes considerable wages; in other cases dies of heartbreak, drinking, and starvation. That really is his economic position, so far as I have seen it. But for a man really intent to do *a man's work* in literature in these times, I should say that even with the highest talent he might have to be fed oftentimes like Elijah, by the ravens: and if his talent, though real, was not very high, he might easily see himself cut off from wages altogether; all men saying to him, 'The thing you have to offer us is, in the supply and demand market, worth nothing whatever.' Such a man as that latter, if he could live at all I should account him lucky.

This, my generous young friend, this is the sad No

answer I have to give you—a sad but a true one. The advice I ground on it you already discover—Not by any means to quit the solid paths of practical business for these inane froth oceans which, however gas-lighted they may be, are essentially what I have called them somewhere, base as Fleet Ditch, the mother of dead dogs. Surely it is better for a man to *work* out his God-given faculty than merely to speak it out, even in the most Augustan times. Surely of all places in this planet the place where the gods do most need a working man of genius is Manchester, a place sunk in sordid darkness of every kind except the glitter of gold, and which, if it were once irradiated, might become one of the beautifullest things this sun has ever seen.

Believe me yours, with real good will,
Kinder than it looks,
T. CARLYLE.

He was himself to see Manchester this summer, and perhaps his correspondent there. At the end of July he took his wife to Matlock for change of air. At Matlock they were joined by the now famous W. E. Forster, then one of his ardent admirers, and accompanied him to his house at Rawdon, whence Carlyle sent his mother, as usual, an account of his adventures, which is curious as showing his habits of observation and the objects which most interested him. He had seen all the watering-places, the wonders of wonders in Derbyshire, 'the Devil's-i-Peak,' 'the horrid cavern so called,' &c.

Among the sights (he says) was that of a lone old woman living literally like a rabbit, burrowed under ground. This was near Buxton, a sight worth remembering. There are huge quarries of lime there; the rubbish, ashes of the kilns, &c., when many years exposed to the weather, hardens into

real stone, and is then a kind of rocky moleheap of large dimensions, with grass on the top. The natives then scrape out the inside, and make a cottage of the upper crust! There are five or six such huts in that place, and used to be more. This poor old woman and her hut were all as tidy as a new pin, whitewashed, scoured, &c.; a most sensible, haughty, and even dignified old woman; had been born there, had lost father, mother, husband, son there, and was drinking her poor tea there in dignified solitude when we came, no company with her but a cat, and no wish to have any, she said, 'till the Lord was pleased to take her to those she had lost.' An elder sister, upwards of fourscore, inhabiting with some children and grandchildren a similar cave not far off, had just fallen into the fire and been burnt to death two days before. None of us, I think, will ever forget that poor old woman, with her little teapot, her neat *mutch* and black ribbon, her lean hook nose and black old eyes as sharp as eagles.' We left a shilling with her and great respect, and came our way.

He might now have had his choice among the great houses of the land if he had cared to visit them, but he steadily reserved every available autumn for his mother. The week at Rawdon being over, his wife went home, and he made for Scotsbrig, pausing at Manchester with Miss Jewsbury and her brother Frank to see iron works and cotton mills; to talk with some of the leaders of the working men, who were studying his writings with passionate interest, and himself to be stared at in the Jewsbury drawing-room by the idle and curious. The most interesting of his Manchester adventures was a day at Rochdale, when he made acquaintance with Mr. Jacob Bright and his distinguished brother.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: September 13, 1847.

The mills! oh the fetid, fuzzy, ill-ventilated mills! And in Sharp's cyclopean smithy[1] do you remember the poor 'grinders' sitting underground in a damp dark place, some dozen of them, over their screeching stone cylinders, from every cylinder a sheet of yellow *fire* issuing, the principal light of the place? And the men, I was told, and they themselves knew it, and 'did not mind it,' were all or mostly *killed* before their time, their lungs being ruined by the metal and stone dust! Those poor fellows, in their paper caps with their roaring grindstones, and their yellow *oriflammes* of fire, all grinding themselves so quietly to death, will never go out of my memory. In signing my name, as I was made to do, on quitting that Sharp establishment, whose name think you stood next to be succeeded by mine? In a fine flowing character, *Jenny Lind's!* Dickens and the other Player Squadron (wanting Forster, I think) stood on the same page.

I will tell you about Bright, and Brightdom, and the Rochdale Bright mill some other day. Jacob Bright, the younger man, and actual manager at Rochdale, rather pleased me—a kind of delicacy in his features when you saw them by daylight—at all events, a decided element of 'hero-worship,' which of course went for much. But John Bright, the Anti-Cornlaw member, who had come across to meet me, with his cock nose and pugnacious eyes and Barclay-Fox-Quaker collar—John and I discorded in our views not a little. And, in fact, the result was that I got to talking occasionally in the Annandale accent, and communicated large masses of my views to the Brights and Brightesses, and shook peaceable Brightdom as with a passing earthquake; and, I doubt, left

[1] Mrs. Carlyle had been there in a previous year.

a very questionable impression of myself there! The poor young ladies (Quaker or ex-Quaker), with their 'abolition of Capital Punishment'—*Ach Gott!* I had great *remorse* of it all that evening; but now begin almost to think I served them right. Any way *we cannot help it;* so there it, and Lancashire in general, may lie for the present.

At Scotsbrig, when he reached it, he sank into what he called 'stagnation and magnetic sleep.' 'Grey hazy dispiritment, fit for nothing but tobacco and silence.' In his own country he was as solitary as in a foreign land, and had more than ever the feelings of a ghost. Even with his mother he could talk less freely than usual, for he found her 'terribly sensitive on the Semitic side of things,' and he was beginning to think that he must write something about that—the 'Exodus from Houndsditch,' as he termed it, being a first essential step towards all improvement. The news from Ireland disgusted him, 'Meagher of the Sword' talking open treason.

I think (he said) the native people are ripening towards rebellion, and are not unlikely some of them to get *hanged* before all end. Oh that illustrious O'Connell! how fast his lies, like dragons' teeth, are sprouting up into armed and *mad* men! The wonderfullest benefaction he that even this foolish age has crowned with vivats and welcomed as one sent from heaven!

He wandered about the moors at night, 'the driving clouds and moaning winds his only company.' Even these were not impressive, 'for his heart was sunk into its cell, and refused to be impressed.' He 'said

silently to the muddy universe, Yes, thou art there then; the fact is no better than so. Let me recognise the fact, and admit it and adopt it.'

He had reasons for uneasiness besides the state of the universe. His wife had been ill again. Lady Harriet Baring, hearing she was alone in Cheyne Row, had carried her off to Addiscombe, and little guessing the state of her mind, and under the impression that she was hypochondriacal, had put her under a course of bracing. She wanted wine when she was exhausted; Lady Harriet thought wine unwholesome. She was not allowed to go to bed when tortured with headache. She suffered from cold, and lighted a fire in her bedroom. Fires were not allowed at Addiscombe so early in the autumn, and the housemaid removed the coals. Lady Harriet meant only to be kind, but was herself heaping fuel on a fire of a more dangerous sort. Carlyle himself was relieved when he heard that 'she was at home again, out of that constrained lodging.' 'My mother's rage,' he wrote, 'has been considerable ever since she heard of it; "that the puir creature could na get a bit fire! not so much as a bit of fire for a' their grandeur:" money, if you exclude better things which are apt to go with the want of it, is of small value to the possessor or others.' True enough! but one asks with wonder why he could not tell Lady Harriet plainly that, if she wished for his wife's friendship, she must treat her differently; why he insisted on the continuance of an intimacy which could never become an affectionate one, instead of accepting and adopting the facts, as a condition of the mud in the universe. His mother was full of tenderness for her

forlorn daughter-in-law. She insisted, when Carlyle was going home, on sending her 'a pair of coarse knit stockings' by him, 'though he said she would never wear them, and two missionary narratives, which even he could not be persuaded to read.' He was to write his wife's name in them at Chelsea, and say, 'from her old, withered mother.'

Two bad nights before his departure sent him off in a dreary condition. 'Ah me!' he exclaimed, 'my poor old mother, poor old Annandale, poor old life in general; and in this shattered state of nerves all stands before one with such a glaring ghastliness of hideous reality.'

It is curious that a man with such powerful practical sense should have indulged these morbid feelings, as he evidently too readily did. It was 'the nature of the beast,' as he often said. He was at home by the second week in October, where an unexpected pleasure was waiting for him. His friend Emerson had arrived from Boston. Between Emerson and him there had been affectionate correspondence ever since they had met at Craigenputtock. Emerson had arranged for the publication of his books in the United States, and had made his rights respected there. He in turn had introduced Emerson's Essays to the English world by a preface, and now Emerson had come in person to show himself as a lecturer on English platforms. I remember this visit. I already knew Emerson by his writings; I then learnt to know him personally, for he came to see us at Oxford, and his conversation, perhaps unknown to himself, had an influence on my after life. On his first landing he was a guest at Cheyne Row,

and then went away to Manchester. 'I rather think,' Carlyle wrote shortly after, 'his popularity is not very great hitherto. His doctrines are too airy and thin for the solid practical heads of the Lancashire region. We had immense talking with him here, but found he did not give us much to chew the cud upon—found, in fact, that he came with the rake rather than the shovel. He is a pure high-minded man, but I think his talent is not quite so high as I had anticipated.'

A far more important thing was what Carlyle was next to do himself, for as long as he was idle he was certain to be miserable—and he had been idle now for more than a year. He brought out another edition of his 'Miscellanies' this autumn.

These books of mine, poor things! (he said, in sending his mother a copy) bring me in some money now, like cows that give a drop of milk at last, though they had a terrible time of it as calves. Let us be thankful. It is better to have one's evil days when one is young than when one is old.

The 'French Revolution' was going into another edition also. For this and the 'Miscellanies' he was paid 600*l*. So that he could say:—

I am pretty well in funds at present, not chased about as I used to be by the haggard Shade of Beggary, which is a great relief to me. I am very thankful for my poverty, and for my deliverance from it in good time.

In January came an indispensable visit to the Barings. Mrs. Carlyle was to have gone, and they were to have stayed four weeks; but the winter was

cold; she was feeble, and afraid of a chill. Wish to go she of course had none; and though Lady Harriet wrote warmly pressing letters, she insisted on remaining at home. Carlyle went, but if he describes his condition correctly, he could hardly have been an agreeable guest. For him there was no peace but in work, and life in such houses was organised idleness. To his mother he speaks of himself as wandering disconsolately on the shore watching the gangs of Portsmouth convicts; to his wife as 'unslept, dyspeptic, bewildered.'

Ach Gott! (he writes to her). Why do I complain to poor thee, confined to thy own bed at present? Well, I will not complain. Only, if *you* had been strong, I would have told you how very weak and wretched I was. Some time about three, I think, I got asleep after bathing, woke again some time after five, went out of doors to smoke, had slept about three minutes more when the valet, with his brushed clothes, started me up again, and there it ended. That is my history, an excuse at least for incoherent writing. In fact, if it were not for my own consolation—for I know thou lovest me in spite of thy harshnesses and mistrusts—I think I need not have written at all. It seemed to me last night with triple and tenfold emphasis what it has all along seemed, that I had been much better in my own bed at Chelsea.

He was worried, he said, with 'the idleness, the folly, the cackling and noise.' Milnes was his best resource. Milnes had come, and the Taylors and Bullers and Bear Ellice, and the usual circle; but it would not do. He was sickly, dispirited, unwell.

I have (he said) with less suffering and exertion com-

passed the attendance of six college classes in my time. Perhaps there is a lesson in this. Nay, doubtless there is, and I hope I shall learn it, for the fees are not inconsiderable. My reflections in my few hours of solitude in the early mornings, amid the tramplings and trottings, ought to be of a didactic nature.

Again a little later:—

For me, I feel as if it were little I had got here, or were likely to get, but a huge nightmare of indigestion, insomnia, and fits of black impatience with myself and others—self chiefly. . . . I am heartily sick of my dyspeptic bewilderment and imprisonment. Something beautiful and good is in the heart of the thing too, but it is clearly not for *me* (at least so seems it) to unravel and get hold of. —— says little except elaborate nothingness to the women, or with solemnity reads Shakespeare. We are a pretty society, but a distracted one. Ten days of such, with a cold to help, is about enough, I guess.

Enough it proved; he could stand no more of it, and fled home. But it is impossible not to ask 'What was Carlyle doing in such a galley?' Why was he there at all? It is with real relief that I approach the end of the half-enchanted state into which he had fallen after 'Cromwell.' It had been a trying time, both for his wife and for him. The next letter, written after he had got back from Bay House, gives the first glimpses of intended fresh occupation.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: Feb. 12, 1848.

Jane has had rather a wearisome bout of it; never very

ill, but feeble, coughing, and quite unable to front the bad season with any freedom. She got out of her *room* about a week ago, went and had a short walk in the streets one day, but has never ventured out since, the weather, though bright, having grown a little frosty. She stirs about the house now, and her cough is well nigh quite gone. If the sun were fairly on his feet, she too will be re-established, I think. . . . A book consisting of my poor friend John Sterling's scattered writings has just come out, edited by one Julius Hare, an Archdeacon, soon to be a Bishop, they say; a good man, but rather a weak one, with a Life of Sterling which by no means contents me altogether. Probably one of my first tasks will be something in reference to this work of poor Sterling's; for he left it in charge to me too, and I surrendered my share of the task to the Archdeacon, being so busy with 'Cromwell' at the time. But I am bound by very sacred considerations to keep a sharp eye over it, and will consider what can now be done.[1] Sterling was a noble creature, but had too little patience, and indeed too thin and sick a constitution of *body*, to turn his fine gifts to the best account.

The Parliament has come back, and the town, especially our Western quarter of it, is getting very loud with carriages and population again. But we hitherto have little to do with all that. There has been, as you might see, much vain controversy about a certain very useless Dr. Hampden and his being made a bishop against the will of some. Nothing could seem to me more entirely contemptible and deplorable than the whole figure of that thing has been. Now they are for getting Jews into Parliament. For the 'Jew Bill,' too, I

[1] Emerson told me that in the summer of this year 1848 he and Carlyle talked over this subject. They concluded that Sterling was too considerable a man to be set up as a 'theological cockshy,' and that either Carlyle or he himself must write a true account of him.

would not give half a snuff of tobacco, for or against. We will leave that too, and much else, to fight its own battle.

He does not tell his mother, as he might have done in this last paragraph, that he had been invited to take a share in that battle. I tell the story as he told it to me. Some time while the Jew Bill was before Parliament, and the fate of it doubtful, Baron Rothschild wrote to ask him to write a pamphlet in its favour, and intimated that he might name any sum which he liked to ask as payment. I inquired how he had answered. 'Well,' he said, 'I had to tell him it couldn't be; but I observed, too, that I could not conceive why he and his friends, who were supposed to be looking out for the coming of Shiloh, should be seeking seats in a Gentile legislature.' I asked what Baron Rothschild had said to that. 'Why,' Carlyle said, 'he seemed to think the coming of Shiloh was "vary" dubious, and that meanwhile, &c. &c.'

The Journal had remained almost a blank for four years, only a few trifling notes having been jotted down in it, but it now contains a long and extremely interesting entry. The real Carlyle is to be especially looked for in this book, for it contains his dialogues with his own heart.

Journal.

Feb. 9, 1848—Chapman's money[1] all paid, lodged now in the Dumfries Bank. New edition of 'Sartor' to be wanted soon. My poor books of late have yielded me a certain fluctuating

[1] Chapman & Hall, now Carlyle's publishers.

annual income; at all events, I am quite at my ease as to money, and that on such low terms. I often wonder at the luxurious ways of the age. Some 1,500*l.*, I think, is what has accumulated in the bank. Of fixed income (from Craigenputtock) 150*l.* a year. Perhaps as much from my books may lie fixed amid the huge fluctuation (last year, for instance, it was 800*l.*; the year before 100*l.*; the year before that about 700*l.*; this year again it is like to be 100*l.*; the next perhaps nothing—very fluctuating indeed)—some 300*l.* in all, and that amply suffices me. For my wife is the best of housewives; noble, too, in reference to the property which is *hers*, which she has never once in the most distant way seemed to know to be hers. Be this noted and remembered; my thrifty little lady—every inch a lady—ah me! In short, I authentically feel indifferent to money, would not go this way or that to gain more money. So *do* the Destinies reward us; not in the way we expected, but in a far diviner way. They do make us rich if we have deserved to be so. How rich, for example, is Hudson, King of Railways? For certain quantities of yellow metal you can still command him to go lower than any shoeblack goes, to make himself an *unhangable swindler* namely. That, I understand, as it was explained to me, has been and is the intrinsic nature of many of his operations. In sane hours I sometimes feel a pious thankfulness on the economic side.

For above two years now I have been as good as totally idle, composedly lying *fallow*. It is frightful to think of! After getting out of 'Cromwell,' my whole being seemed to say, more sulkily, more wearedly than ever before, 'What good is it?' I am wearied and near heartbroken. Nobody on the whole '*believes* my report.' The friendliest reviewers, I can see, regard me as a wonderful athlete, a ropedancer whose perilous somersets it is worth sixpence (paid into the Circulating Library) to *see*; or at most I seem to them a desperate

half mad, if usefullish fireman, rushing along the ridge tiles in a frightful manner to quench the burning chimney. Not one of them all can or will *do* the least to help me. The blockheads! A snuff of tobacco for them and their eulogies too! This is what they and their sweet voices are worth. Neither does Art, &c., in the smallest hold out with me. In fact, that concern has all gone down with me, like ice too thin on a muddy pond. I do not believe in "Art"—nay, I do believe it to be one of the deadliest *cants;* swallowing, it too its hecatombs of souls. So that the world, daily growing more unspeakable in meaning to me, as well as daily more inarticulate, and I quite indisposed to *try* speaking to it, the result has been silence and fallow, which, unless I will go *mad*, must end, as I begin to see, before long. 'Too much to say,' I suppose, is not so bad a complaint as 'too little;' but it too is very troublesome. In brief, nothing is—but by *labour*, which we call sorrow, misery, &c. Thou must gird up thy loins again and work another stroke or two before thou die.

At Alverstoke in January last, for the third time now, and very full of *suffering* in all ways there. Have seen a good deal of the higher ranks—plenty of lords, politicians, fine ladies, &c. Certainly a new *topdressing* for me that, nor attainable either without peril. Let me see if any growth will come of it, and what. The most striking conclusion to me is, how like all men of all ranks in England (and doubtless in every land) intrinsically are to one another. Our aristocracy, I rather take it, are the best, or as good as any class we have; but their position is fatally awry. Their whole breeding and way of life is to go 'gracefully idle'—most tragically so; and which of them can mend it? X. was at Alverstoke, dull to a degree, commonplace, dogmatic limited, productive of very little, yet something essentially genial, true, and friendly in the heart of him withal; an

honest man, precious, though with only insular or even parish culture—enveloped in Southeyisms, Shovel-hattisms, &c. Milnes also was there, fresh from Spain, full of sophistries and socialities as usual. I was very solitary, sleepless, and unhappy all the time. Came off after ten days, as Jane could not risk venturing after me. . . . Alfred Tennyson here sometimes lately. Gone out of town with a certain Aubrey de Vere to Curragh Chase, Limerick. His 'Princess,' a gorgeous piece of writing, but to me new melancholy proof of the futility of what they call 'Art.' Alas! Alfred, too, I fear, will prove one of the *sacrificed*, and in very deed it is pity.[1] Emerson is now in England, in the North, lecturing to Mechanics' Institutes, &c.; in fact, though he knows it not, to a kind of intellectual *canaille*. Came here and stayed with us some days on his first arrival. Very *exotic;* of smaller dimensions, too, and differed much from me, as a gymnosophist sitting idle on a flowery bank may do from a wearied worker and wrestler passing that way with many of his bones broken. Good of him I could get none, except from his friendly looks and elevated exotic polite ways; and he would not let me sit silent for a minute. Solitary on that side too, then? Be it so, if so it must be. But we will try a little farther. Lonelier man is not in this world that I know of. . . . No deliverance from 'confusion,' from practical *uncertainty*, and all its sad train of miseries and waste, is to be looked for while one continues in this world. Life consists, as it were, in the sifting of huge rubbish-mounds, and the choosing from them, ever with more or less error, what is golden and vital to us.

Schemes of books (to be now set about? . . . Alas!)

[1] Carlyle mentions in one of his letters that it had been he who first set on foot the requisition to the Government for Tennyson's pension. For himself he never sought a pension, nor would accept one when offered.

'*Exodus from Houndsditch.*' That, alas! is *im*possible as yet, though it is the gist of all writings and wise books, I sometimes think—the goal to be wisely aimed at as the first of all for us. Out of Houndsditch, indeed! Ah, were we but out, and had our own along with us! But they that come out hitherto come in a state of brutal nakedness, scandalous mutilation; and impartial bystanders say sorrowfully, 'Return rather, it is better even to return.'

'*Ireland: Spiritual Sketches.*' Begin with St. Colm.; end with the *rakes of Mallow.* All lies in Spiritualism. The outer miseries of Ireland, and of all lands, are nothing but the inevitable body of that soul. Had I more knowledge of Ireland, I could make something of it in that form.

'*Life of John Sterling.*' I really must draw up some statement on that subject—some picture of a gifted soul whom I knew, and who was my friend. Might not many things withal be *taught* in the course of such a delineation?

'*The Scavenger Age.*' Chadwick's men are working in sight of me daily at present at Chelsea Old Church. Our age is really up to nothing better than the sweeping *out the gutter.* Might it but do that well! It is the indispensable beginning of all.

The Exodus from Houndsditch Carlyle saw to be then impossible—impossible; and yet the essential preliminary of true spiritual recovery. The 'Hebrew old clothes' were attached so closely to pious natures that to tear off the wrapping would be to leave their souls to perish in spiritual nakedness; and were so bound up with the national moral convictions that the sense of duty could not be separated from a belief in the technical inspiration of the Bible. And yet Carlyle knew that it could do no good to anyone to believe what was untrue;

and he knew also that since science had made known to us the real relation between this globe of ours and the stupendous universe, no man whose mind and heart were sound could any longer sincerely believe in the Christian creed. The most that such a man could arrive at was to persuade himself by refined reasonings that it might perhaps be true, that it could not be proved false, and that therefore he might profess it openly from the lips outwards with a clear conscience. But the convictions which govern the practical lives of men are not remote possibilities, but concrete certainties. As long as the 'Holy Place' in their souls is left in possession of powerless opinions, they are practically without God in this world. The 'wealth of nations' comes to mean material abundance, and individual duty an obligation to make money; while intellect, not caring to waste itself on shadows, constructs philosophies to show that God is no necessity at all. Carlyle's faith, on the other hand, was that without a spiritual belief —a belief in a Divine Being, in the knowledge of whom and obedience to whom mortal welfare alone consisted —the human race must degenerate into brutes. He longed, therefore, that the windows of the shrine should be washed clean, and the light of heaven let into it. The longer the acknowledgment of the facts regarding inspiration, &c., was delayed, the more hollow grew the established creeds, the falser the professional advocates of the creeds, the more ungodly the life and philosophy of the world. It was said of old, 'Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye enter not in yourselves, and those that would enter in ye will not suffer.'

Yes (he exclaimed), the Redeemer liveth. He is no Jew, or image of a man, or surplice, or old creed, but the Unnameable Maker of us, voiceless, formless within our own soul, whose voice *is* every noble and genuine impulse of our souls. He is yet there, in us and around us, and *we* are there. No Eremite or fanatic whatever had more than we have; how much less had most of them?

Why, then, did he find it *im*possible to speak plainly on this momentous subject? Because, as he had said of the poor priests at Bruges, because, false as they were, there was nothing to take their places if they were cast out but the Gospel of Progress, which was falser even than they. God Himself would in due time build a new temple above the ruins of the old beliefs. He himself, meanwhile, would do ill to wound simple hearts like that of his poor old mother. His resolution was often hardly tested. Often he would exclaim fiercely against 'detestable idolatries.' Often, on the appearance of some more than usually insincere episcopal manifesto, he would wish the Bishops and all their works dead as Etruscan soothsayers. But the other mood was the more prevalent. He spoke to me once with loathing of Renan's 'Vie de Jésus.' I asked if he thought a true life could be written. He said, 'Yes, certainly, if it were right to do it; but it is not.'

The Exodus, nevertheless, always lay before him as a thing that would have to be, if men were ever to recover their spiritual stature. 'The ancient mythologies and religions,' he says in his Journal, 'were merely religious readings of the History of Antiquity, genial apprehensions, and genial (that is, always *divine*) representa-

tions of the events of earthly life, such as occur yet, only that we have no geniality to take them up, nothing but stupidity to take them up with.'

All sorrows are included in that, the fountain of degradation for the modern man, who is thereby reduced to baseness in every department of his existence, and remains hopelessly captive and caitiff till that nightmare be lifted off him. Oh, ye Colleges of Ancient Art, Modern Art, High Art! oh, ye Priest Sanhedrims! ye Modern Colleges, Royal Academies, ye Greek Nightmares, and still worse Hebrew Nightmares, that press out the soul of poor England and poor Europe, when will you take flight, and let us have a little breath, think you? Exodus from Houndsditch, I believe, is the first beginning of such deliverance.

Almost forty years have passed since these words were written, and we still wait to be delivered. Nay, some think that we need no deliverance—*ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαί.* The water of life is again flowing back towards the old fountains. It may be so. The Ark of the Church has been repainted and gilded and decorated, and with architecture and coloured windows, and choral services, and incense, and candlesticks, and symbolic uniforms for mystic officiators, the dying body has been electrified into a semblance of animation. Is it life or merely galvanism? There are other signs not favourable to the pretensions of the Church revivalists. The air has cleared. It is no longer a sin to say what one thinks, and power no longer weights the scale in favour of orthodoxy. Forty years ago the law said to a clergyman, 'You shall teach what the formulas prescribe,

whether you believe it or not, and you shall stay at your post, even though you know that you disbelieve it; for you shall enter no other profession; you shall teach this, or you shall starve.' That is gone, and much else is gone. Men are allowed to think and speak as they will without being punished by social ostracism. Truth must stand henceforth by its own strength, and what is really incredible will cease to be believed. Very much of the change in this happy direction is due to Carlyle's influence; in this direction, and perhaps also in the other, every serious man, of every shade of opinion, has to thank him for the loud trumpet notes which have awakened the age out of its sleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

A.D. 1848-9. ÆT. 53-54.

Revolutions of February in Paris—Thoughts on Democracy—London Society—Macaulay—Sir Robert Peel—Chartist petition, April 10—Articles in the 'Examiner'—Paris battles in the streets—Emerson—Visit to Stonehenge—The Reaction in Europe—Death of the first Lord Ashburton, and of Charles Buller—Mazzini at Rome—King Hudson—Arthur Clough—First introduction to Carlyle—His appearance.

One or other of the subjects for a new book on which we saw Carlyle to be meditating would probably have been now selected, when suddenly, like a bolt out of the blue sky, came the Revolution of February 24 at Paris. The other nations of Europe followed suit, the kings, as Carlyle expressed it, 'running about like a gang of coiners when the police had come among them.' Ireland blazed out. English Chartists talked of 'physical force.' The air seemed charged with lightning, threatening the foundations of modern society. So extraordinary a phenomenon surprised Carlyle less than it surprised most of his contemporaries. It confirmed what he had been saying for many years. The universal dungheap had caught fire again. Imposture was bankrupt once more, and 'Shams' this time, it was to be hoped, would be finished off in earnest. He did not look for an immediate convulsion in England; but he did believe that, unless England took warning and mended her ways, her turn would come.

Journal.

March 4, 1848.—Third French insurrection. Louis Philippe flung out; he and his entire pack, with a kind of exquisite ignominy, 'driving off in a street cab,' the fraternity arriving here in slow detail, dribbling in for a week past, all the young men without their wives. Louis Philippe himself, the old scoundrel, is since Saturday night safe at Claremont; came to England in an old P-jacket, like King Crispin.

March 5.—Scheme of volume: *Democracy*. What one might have to say on it? (1) Inevitable now in all countries: regarded vulgarly as *the* solution. Reason why it cannot be so; something farther and ultimate. (2) Terrible disadvantage of the Talking Necessity; much to be said here. What this comes from. Properly an insincere character of mind. (3) Follows *deducible* out of that! *Howardism*. Regard every Abolition Principle man as your enemy, ye reformers. Let them insist not that punishment be abolished, but that it fall on the right heads. (4) *Fictions*, under which head come Cants, Phantasms, alas! Law, Gospel, Royalty itself. (5) Labour question. Necessity of government. Notion of voting to all is delirium. Only the vote of the wise is called for, of advantage even to the voter himself. Rapid and inevitable progress of anarchy. Want of bearing *rule* in all private departments of life. Melancholy remedy: 'Change as often as you like.' (6) Though men insincere, not all equally so. A great choice. How to know a sincere man. Be sincere yourself. Career open to talent. This actually is the conclusion of the whole matter.

Six things. It would make a volume. Shall I begin it? I am sick, lazy, and dispirited.

The state of Europe was too interesting and too

obscure to permit composure for writing. For the four months of that spring, the papers each morning announced some fresh convulsion, and the coolest thinkers could only look on and watch. When the Young Ireland deputation went to Paris to ask the Provisional Government to give a lift to the Irish Republic, war with France was at one moment on the cards. Ledru Rollin and the advanced sections, knowing that if peace continued they would have to reckon with the reaction, were inclined to follow the example of 1793, and go in for a republican propagandism. Carlyle's general thoughts are expressed in an interesting letter to Erskine.

To Thomas Erskine, Linlathen.

Chelsea: March 24, 1848.

To us as to you this immense explosion of democracy in France, and from end to end of Europe, is very remarkable and full of interest. Certainly never in our time was there seen such a spectacle of history as we are now to look at and assist in. I call it very joyful; yet also unutterably sad. Joyful, inasmuch as we are taught again that all mortals do long towards justice and veracity; that no strongest charlatan, no cunningest fox of a Louis Philippe, with his great *Master* to help him, can found a habitation upon lies, or establish a 'throne of iniquity'—nay, that he cannot even attempt such a problem in these times any more; which we may take to be blessed news indeed, in the pass we were come to. But, on the other hand, how sad that the news *should* be so *new* (for that is really the vital point of the mischief); that all the world, in its protest against False Government, should find no remedy but that of rushing into No Government or anarchy (kinglessness), which I take this republican universal

suffragism to inevitably be. Happily they are not disposed to fight, at least not with *swords*, just yet; but abundance of *fighting* (probably enough in all kinds) one does see in store for them; and long years and generations of weltering confusion, miserable to contemplate, before anything can be *settled* again. Hardly since the invasion of the wild Teutons and wreck of the old Roman Empire has there been so strange a Europe, all turned topsy turvy, as we now see. What was at the top has come, or is rapidly coming, to the *bottom*, where indeed, such was its intrinsic quality, it deserved this long while past to be.

All over London people are loud upon the French, Hôtel de Ville especially; censure universal, or light mockery; no recognition among us for what of merit those poor people have in their strange and perilous position at present. Right to hurl out Louis Philippe, most of us said or thought, but there I think our approval ended. The what next upon which the French had been thinking, none of our people will seriously ask themselves. I, in vain, strive to explain that this of the 'organisation of labour' is precisely the question of questions for all governments whatsoever; that it vitally behoved the poor French Provisional to attempt a solution; that by their present implements and methods it seems impossible they should succeed; but that they, and what is better, all governments, must actually make some advance towards success and solve said question more and more, or disappear swiftly from the face of the earth without successors nominated. There seems to me only that alternative; and, however it may fare with the French, I calculate that we here at home shall profit inexpressibly by such an example, if we be wise to try the inevitable problem while it is yet *time*. In fact, I have a kind of notion to write a book about it, I myself; but I am not yet grown sufficiently *miserable* to set about it straightway. Fraternity, liberty,

&c., I want to explain, is not the remedy at all; but true *government* by the wise, true, and noble-minded of the foolish, perverse, and dark, with or *against* their consent; which I discern to be the eternal law of the world, and a rugged and severe but most blessed law, terribly forgotten in the universal twaddle, insincerity, and cowardly sloth of these latter times. Peace! peace! when there is no peace? I have, in fact, a great many things to say, far too many; and my heart is as if half-dead, and has no wish to speak any more, but to lie *silent*, if so might be, till it sank into the Divine silence, and were then at rest. Courage, however!

London parties in an 'era of revolutions' were excited and exciting. The leading men came out with their opinions with less reserve. Carlyle had frequently met Macaulay in drawing-rooms; but they had rather avoided each other. He had been much struck, many years before, with the 'Essay on Milton;' indeed to the last he always spoke respectfully of Macaulay; but when two men of positive temperament hold views diametrically opposite, and neither can entertain even a suspicion that the other may accidentally be right, conversation between them is usually disagreeable. Thus they had not sought for any closer acquaintance, and common friends had not tried to bring them together. It happened now and then, however, that they were guests at the same table.

Journal.

March 14, 1848.—Friday last at Lord Mahon's to breakfast; Macaulay, Lord and Lady Ashley, there, &c. Niagara of eloquent commonplace talk from Macaulay. 'Very good-

natured man ;' man cased in official mail of proof ; stood my impatient fire-explosions with much patience, merely hissing a little steam up, and continued his Niagara—supply and demand ; power ruinous to powerful himself ; *im*possibility of Government doing more than keep the peace ; suicidal distraction of new French republic, &c. Essentially irremediable, commonplace nature of the man ; all that was in him now gone to the tongue ; a squat, thickset, low-browed, short, grizzled little man of fifty. These be thy gods, oh Israel ! Ashley is very strait between the eyes—a bad form of physiognomy ; otherwise a stately aristocratic-looking man.

A far more interesting meeting was with Sir Robert Peel, 'one of the few men in England whom Carlyle had any curiosity to see.' Peel had known him by sight since the present of 'Cromwell,' and had given him looks of recognition when they met in the streets. The Barings brought about a personal acquaintance, which increased till Peel's death. It began at a dinner at Bath House.

Journal.

March 27.—Went to the Peel enterprise ; sate next Sir Robert—an evening not unpleasant to remember. Peel is a finely-made man of strong, not heavy, rather of elegant, stature ; stands straight, head slightly thrown back, and eyelids modestly drooping ; every way mild and gentle, yet with less of that fixed smile than the portraits give him. He is towards sixty, and, though not broken at all, carries, especially in his complexion, when you are *near* him, marks of that age : clear, strong blue eyes which kindle on occasion, voice extremely good, low-toned, something of *cooing* in it, rustic, affectionate, honest, mildly persuasive. Spoke about French

Revolutions new and old; well read in all that; had seen General Dumouriez; reserved seemingly by nature, obtrudes nothing of *diplomatic* reserve. On the contrary, a vein of mild *fun* in him, real sensibility to the ludicrous, which feature I liked best of all. Nothing in that slight inspection seemed to promise better in him than his laugh. 'Milnes *Ouvrier*,'[1] he said to M——, with an innocent archness, in allusion to our coming revolution. 'I reserves myself for the toolip' (for the mitre on the coach panel); so said a London rioter in the Reform Bill time, when a body of the rioters had been set to howl down the Lords in their coat-of-arms coaches. 'Why don't you shout?' cries one. 'No,' answered his neighbour, 'I reserves myself for the toolip.' They say this is a common story of Peel's. He told it very well, and one likes to see the grave politician taking hearty hold of such a thing. Shall I see the Premier again? I consider him by far our first public man—which indeed is saying little—and hope that England in these frightful times may still get some good of him.

N.B.—This night with Peel was the night in which Berlin city executed its last terrible battle (19th of March to Sunday morning the 20th, five o'clock). While we sate there the streets of Berlin city were all blazing with grapeshot and the war of enraged men. What is to become of all that? I have a book to write about it. Alas!

We hear of a great Chartist petition to be presented by 200,000 men. People here keep up their old foolish levity in speaking of these things; but considerate persons find them to be very grave; and indeed all, even the laughers, are in considerable secret alarm.

The Chartist petition and the once famous April 10

[1] Albert *Ouvrier* was one of the famous ten members of the Provisional Government at Paris.

are now all but forgotten; the main points of the Charter having become law, with what advantage to those who threatened to fight for them they themselves can best tell. The day itself and what happened upon it are described by Carlyle in a letter to his wife, who had been carried off to Addiscombe again for change of air. He had been trying to set some of his thoughts on paper.

The history of all Europe (he had noted on April 5) is at present to me the saddest, though on the whole decisive and universal expulsion and ejection of the genus Sham King is less mournful, than quiescent composed satisfaction with said accursed genus, which used to be, and still is *here*, the general law. The future for all countries fills me with a kind of horror. I have been scribbling, scribble, scribble—alas! it will be long before that makes a book. Persist however. Anthony Sterling has sworn himself in as anti-Chartist special constable. All the people are swearing in, he says, and in considerable alarm about Monday next and the 200,000 processioning petitioners.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, at Addiscombe.

Chelsea: April 10, 1848.

The demon got me last night, for I could not sleep. . . . I have lived all day without speaking twenty words hitherto, a most shivering, dispirited, disgraceful kind of creature, and am more like an ancient Egyptian mummy at present than a modern living British man.

How can I tell you of the 'Revolution' in these circumstances? I did go out earlier than usual to see it, or at least all buttoned up, and decided to walk myself into a glow of heat—but—but the venomous cold wind began unexpect-

edly in Cadogan Place to spit rain, and I had no umbrella! At Burlington Arcade things had grown so questionable in that respect, I resolved to step in for a few minutes, which done I found the rain had commenced pouring, and I had nothing for it but to hail a Chelsea omnibus and come home again. Judge then whether I can tell you of the 'Revolution.' My sole knowledge of it is from my eyes in the above short distance, and from a kind of official individual, a 'Paisley lawyer bodie,' to whom I put three words of question and got an answer of inordinate length, indeed longer than I would take with the rain just beginning to be serious. Know, however, oh Goody! there is *no* revolution nor any like to be for some months or years yet; that the City of London is as safe and quiet as the farm of Addiscombe; and that empty rumours and 150,000 oaths of special constables is hitherto the sole amount of this adventure for us. Piccadilly itself, however, told us how frightened the people were. Directly at Hyde Park Corner one could see that there was something in the wind. Wellington had his iron blinds all accurately down; the Green Park was altogether shut, even the footpaths of it; the big gates of Constitution Hill; and in the inside there stood a score of mounted Guardsmen privately drawn up under the arch—dreadfully cold, I dare say. For the rest, not a single fashionable carriage was on the street; not a private vehicle, but, I think, two surgeons' broughams, all the way to Egyptian Hall; omnibuses running, a few street cabs, and even a mud cart or two; nothing else; the flag pavements also nearly vacant, not a fifth of their usual population there, and those also of the strictly business kind; not a *gentleman* to be seen, hardly one or two of the sort called *gents*. 'Most mysterus!' Happily, however, the Paisley body explained it all to me. A meeting, some kind of meeting, had been allowed to take place at Kennington Common; but Feargus O'Connor had there

warned the said meeting that there would and should be no 'procession,' but that everybody, under pain of broken crowns, must now make for home in a detached capacity; which, said the Paisley body, is at this time being peaceably done, and, continued he, the people of these streets are all gone to the New Road to, &c. &c., in hopes of seeing the 'procession' pass, and there is no 'procession!' And——I started off here waving my adieus, and took shelter in Burlington Arcade. This is all I know about the No Revolution we have just sustained: and so may the Lord put an end to all cruel wars!

The book that was to be written could not take shape. He knew that he ought to say something, he the author of 'Chartism,' now that the world was turning upside down, and Chartism was actually moving. Foolish people, too, came about him, pressing for his opinions. From his account of the reception which he gave them, they were not likely to come a second time.

April 12, 11 P.M.

Oh, my dear, be sorry for me! I am nearly out of my wits. From three o'clock till now I have been in a tempest of twaddle. . . . Just when I was about escaping into solitude and a walk through the lanes, enter D—— and P——. To them R——, and a violent diatribe extorted from me about Chartisms—a most wearisome, wearing walk and talk. May the devil take that wretched mortal who never walks with me but for my sins! . . . In the evening came in poor E——, and shortly after the 'Ape,' and they are but gone this minute. May the devil confound it! I feel as if I had got enough for one day. . . . No wonder I am surly at people. The wonder is rather I do not shoot them. You wretched

people! you cannot help me, you can only hinder me. Of you I must for ever petition in vain that you would simply not mind me at all, but fancy in your hearts I was a grey stone, and so leave me. . . . E—— was in the car along with Feargus O'Connor and the other Chartists. Never, he says, in the world was there a more total irremediably ludicrous failure than that operation; seldom a viler cowardly scoundrel (according to E——) than that same Feargus as E—— there read him; and now the Moral Force Chartists (Lovett, Cooper, &c.) are to come out and—in short, the world, take it how we will, is mad enough.

Not seeing his way to a book upon Democracy, Carlyle delivered his soul in newspaper articles this spring; chiefly in the 'Examiner' and the 'Spectator.' Even Fonblanque and Rintoul (the editors), friendly though they were to him, could not allow him his full swing. 'There is no established journal,' he said, 'that can stand my articles, no single one they would not blow the bottom out of.' More than ever he wished to have some periodical of his own, which would belong to no party, and where he could hit out all round.

We are going to have sore times in this country (he said), and the trade of governor will not long be possible as poor Lord John and the like of him are used to manage it. Our streets even here—what I never saw before—are getting encumbered with *Irish* beggars; and in the manufacturing districts, as I hear from people on the spot, there hardly ever was greater misery. Something does imperatively require to be *done*, and I want Lord John to know that, or go about his business as soon as he can.

The theory that the title of governments in this

world is 'the consent of the governed' will lead by-and-by, if it lasts long enough, to very curious conclusions. As a theory it was held even in 1848 by speculative Liberal thinkers; but the old English temper was still dominant whenever there was necessity for action. Parliament was still able and willing to pass a Treason Felony Act through its three readings in one afternoon, and teach Chartists and Irish rebels that these islands were not to be swept into the Revolution. But that spirit, Carlyle saw, must abate with the development of Democracy. The will of the people, shifting and uncertain as the weather, would make an end of authoritative action. And yet such a government as he desired to see could be the product only of revolution of another kind. He said often that the Roman Republic was allowed so long a day because on emergencies the constitution was suspended by a dictatorship. Dictatorships might end as they ended at Rome, in becoming perpetual—and to this he would not have objected, if the right man could be found; but he was alone in his opinion, and for the time it was useless to speak of such a mighty transformation scene.

The spring wore on, and the early summer came, and all eyes were watching, sometimes France, and sometimes Ireland. Events followed swiftly in Paris. The government fell into the hands of the Party of Order, the moderate Republicans; and the workmen, who had been struggling for the 'organisation of labour,' determined to fight for it. Out of this came the three tremendous days of June, the sternest battle ever fought in a modern city.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: July 7, 1848.

Doubtless you have been reading of these awful explosions in Paris, which interest everybody, and are indeed an alarming symptom of the misery of this poor time. To us the most interesting feature of all this is General Cavaignac, who has had the command in that terrible business. He is the younger brother of the Cavaignac we loved much and were very intimate with here, while he lived. We often heard of him as a just and valiant and every way excellent man, whom his brother much loved; and, indeed, I believe him to be really such; which kind of character was certainly never more wanted than in the place he is now in. Perhaps no man in all the world could have had so cruel a duty laid upon him as that of cannonading and suppressing these wretched people, whom, we may say, his father and brother and all his kindred had devoted themselves to stirring up; but he saw it to be a *duty*, and he has bravely done it. I suppose he will get himself killed in the business one day, and indeed he appears privately to look for nothing else. His poor old mother still lives; has now no child but him; has a strange history, indeed, to look back upon from the days of Robespierre all the way. It is very curious to me to think how the chiefs of these people, as Armand Marrast, Clément Thomas (late commander of the National Guards), used to sit and smoke a pipe with me in this quiet nook some years ago; and now Louis Philippe is out and *they* are in—not for ever either. 'The Wheel of Fortune,' as old Aunt Babbie's dream said—'the Wheel of Fortune,' 'one spake up and the other spake down!'

Emerson's curiosity had taken him to Paris in May, to see how Progress and Liberty were getting on. He

had visited Oxford also, where he had been entertained at Oriel by my dear friend, Arthur Clough. He had breakfasted in Common Room, where several of us were struck by a likeness in his face to that of one once so familiar in the same spot, who had passed now into another fold—John Henry Newman. Figure and features were both like Newman's. He was like a ghost of Newman born into a new element. The Oxford visit over, Emerson went back to London to finish his lectures. I heard the last of them (at the Polytechnic, I think), and there first saw Carlyle, whom Clough pointed out to me. We were sitting close behind him, and I had no sight of his face; but I heard his loud, kindly contemptuous laugh when the lecturer ended; for, indeed, what Emerson said was, in Carlyle's words, 'rather moonshiny.'

He was to sail for Boston in the week following. Before he left, he and Carlyle went on a small expedition together into Wiltshire, to look at Stonehenge—they two, the latest products of modern thought, and Stonehenge, the silent monument of an age all trace of which, save that one circle of stone, has perished. Emerson has told the story of this adventure in his 'English Notes.' Carlyle mentions it in his Journal, with a few notes on other things.

July 12, 1848.—Went with Emerson on Friday last to see Stonehenge. Saw it in a dim windy evening, very cold, and again on the morrow—windy sunny morning; a guide with us this last time. Trilithons of huge dimensions, mostly fallen. mostly, indeed, removed altogether; circular ditch outside, and huge stone sunk on the brow of it, very visible: inside that, remains of *four* circles; big one lintelled all

round, then a lower one some six or nine feet from the former—an ellipse, or egg-shaped, this latter they say; then the biggest of all separate trilithes); lastly, a small inmost circle of thin little upright stones, six or seven feet high, granite these last, and from Devonshire or *Kildare*, the others being a hard Wiltshire stone, seemingly bastard limestone. Barrows lie dumb all round, the plain itself vacant except of sheep, and dumb even as *Stone hang* itself is. Nobody in the least knows what, when, or how it could have been. Sad, not to say almost dismal, that night as the angry clouds heaped themselves in the wind: and we, wearied, bent homewards to our dismal inn, where was tea and not even milk with it, in the ancient town of Amesbury, sunk quite silent now, the great road (Exeter and London) having become a railway and left it.

Chartist concern, and Irish Repeal concern, and French Republic concern have all gone a bad way since the March entry—April 10 (immortal day already dead), day of Chartist monster petition; 200,000 special constables swore themselves in, &c., and Chartism came to nothing. Riots since, but the leaders all lodged in gaol, tried, imprisoned for two years, &c., and so ends Chartism for the present. Irish Mitchel, poor fellow! is now in Bermuda as a felon; letter from him, letter to him, letter to and from Lord Clarendon—was really sorry for poor Mitchel. But what help? French Republic *cannonaded* by General Cavaignac; a sad outlook there. The windbag of Lamartine quite burst in this manner—so many windbags still bursting and to burst. Gave Emerson a 'Wood's Athenæ;' parted with him in peace. A spiritual *son* of mine? Yes, in a good degree, but gone into philanthropy and other moonshine; for the rest, a dignified, serene, and amiable man of a certain indisputable natural faculty, whose friendliness to me in this world has been great.

The sun of freedom which had risen so augustly on February 24 had been swiftly clouded. Carlyle had not expected definite good from it, and ought not to have been disappointed; yet he had not looked for a collapse so swift and so complete. He had thought that something would have been gained for poor mankind from such a break-down of sham governments. Europe had revolted against them, but the earthquake, alas! had been transient. The sham powers, temporal and spiritual, had been shaken in their seats; but the shock passed, and they had crept back again. Cant, insincerity, imposture, and practical injustice ruled once more in the name of order. He was not entirely cast down. He was still convinced that so wild a burst of passion must have meant something, and the 'something' in time would be seen; but the fog had settled back thick as before, probably for another long interval. Before two years were over, France saw Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire, with the Catholic Church supporting. French bayonets again propped up the Pope, who, in the strength of them, was to declare himself infallible. England rested contented with Laissez-faire and the 'Dismal Science.' In Ireland were famine and famine-fever; for remedy an Encumbered Estates Act, whole villages unroofed by fire or crowbar; two millions of the miserable people flying across the Atlantic with curses on the Anglo-Saxon in their mouths; the Anglo-Saxons themselves blessing Providence for ridding them so cheaply of the Irish difficulty. He saw clearly enough that there was no cure here for the diseases of which modern society was sick. Behind an order so restored could grow only the elements of mischief to

come, and he was sickened at the self-satisfied complaisance with which the upper classes in England and everywhere welcomed the victory of the reaction. The day of reckoning would come whether they believed it or not, and the longer judgment was delayed the heavier it would be. They had another chance allowed them, that was all. Nor was he alone in such reflections. When the small German potentates were restored again, Bunsen read at his breakfast table, in my presence, a letter from Professor Dahlmann, of which I remember this one sentence: 'The crowned heads have again the power in their hands. Let them look how they use it, or the next generation will read the fate of their dynasties on the tombstones of the last kings.'

What Carlyle could do or say it was not easy for him to decide. No advice of his would find attention in the existing humour. The turn which things were taking, the proved impotence of English Chartism especially, seemed to justify the impatience with which practical politicians had hitherto listened to him. It would be a waste of words to go on denouncing 'shams' when 'shams' everywhere were receiving a new lease of life. He stayed in London through the summer, Mrs. Carlyle with him, but doing nothing. On August 10 he writes:—

May I mark this as the *nadir* of my spiritual course at present? Never till now was I so low—utterly dumb this long while, barren, undecided, wretched in mind. My right hand has altogether lost its cunning. Alas! and I have nothing other wherewith to defend myself against the world without, and keep it from overwhelming me, as it often

threatens to do. Many things close at hand are other than happy for me just now; but that is no excuse. If my own energy desert me, I am indeed deserted. . . . The most popular character a man can have is that which he acquires by being offensive to nobody, soft and agreeable to everybody. All men will cordially praise him, and even in some measure love him if so. A fact worth some reflection: a fact which puts the popular judgment *out of court*, in individual moral matters. People praise or blame according as they themselves have fared softly or fared hardly in their intercourse with a man. And now who are '*they*'? Cowardly egoists, greedy slaves; servants of the Devil, for most part. Woe unto you if you treat them softly, if *they* fare well with you! Oliver Cromwell, for doing more of God's will than any man, has to lie under the curses of all men for 200 years. Consider and remember.

In all humours, light or heavy, he could count on the unshaken affection of his friends the Barings. A change in this last year had passed over their worldly situation. The old Lord had died in May, and Mr. Baring was now Lord Ashburton.

He is a very worthy man (Carlyle wrote when the event happened), a very worthy man, as his father was, and I hope will do good in his day and generation, as at least he has a real desire to do. He is now immensely rich, but having no children, and for himself no silly vanity, I believe does not in the least rejoice at such a lot. Poor fellow! He looked miserably ill the day I called on him after his return from the sad scene; and though we did not speak of that, I found him thin and pale, and the picture of a sorrow which well became him. One could not but ask oneself again, thinking of 60,000*l.* a year, 'Alas! what *is* the use of it?'

In September there was to be a great gathering of distinguished persons at the Grange under its new ownership, and the Carlyles, as this year he had not gone to Scotland, were invited for a long autumn visit. He hesitated to join the brilliant circle. He had 'proved by experience that Marquises and Ministers did not differ from little people, except in the clothing and mounting.' He went, however, and his wife went with him. As usual, he kept his mother well informed of his condition.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

The Grange: September 3, 1848.

The first night I did not sleep. It was a strange thing to lie thinking of you all in the deep night here, and have Scotsbrig and the ever dear ones there all present in a place so foreign to them. Last night, however, I made a fair sleep, and to-day feel wonderfully well. I look out of my two big windows here (which are generally flung up) northward into deep masses of wood with avenues and greensward, all in beautiful sunshine and solitude; and silent, except for the twittering of some birds, and, occasionally, the caw of some distant rooks not yet quite fallen dumb. I could sit whole hours, if they would let me alone, and converse only with my own confused thoughts, and try to let them settle a little within me. . . . Charles Buller is here—a very cheerful man to have beside one. The Lady's mother (the widow Lady Sandwich) is the only woman visitor except Jane. Lady Sandwich used to live always in Paris, till she was driven home by the late revolution; a brisk, talking, friendly, and rather entertaining character; has been very beautiful at one time. She has no other daughters left but this, and

no son but one; plenty of money, and fair health; but, alas! *Nothing to do.* That is not a very easy life after all. For the present, too, we have a store of other Lords—Lansdowne, Auckland, Granville, with one or two official commoners. Alas! as Stephenson the engineer said, and as I often say, 'if it were not for the clothes, there would be little difference.' To say truth, I wish we were well home again; and yet I suppose it is useful to come abroad into such foreign circles now and then. Persons so very kind to us are not lightly to be refused.

To his brother he wrote also.

To John Carlyle.

The Grange: September 11, 1848.

As for one's life in this grand mansion, it is one of total idleness, and has in it scarcely anything one can call an event, even for a penny letter. It is a sumptuous elaborate *representation*, which has to be transacted seemingly for its own sake: no result attained by it, or hardly any, except the representation itself. To one like me, it would be frightful to live on such terms. We rise about eight. A valet, who waits here, is charged not to disturb me till half-past eight; but he comes whenever I ring, and that is almost always before the ultimate limit of time. Shaving, bathing, dressing, all deliberately done, last three-quarters of an hour. I have an excellent and airy room, *two* rooms, if I needed, with three windows looking out into the woods and lawns, which are very pretty; a large old-fashioned bed with curtains, which latter is a rare blessing; and a degree of quietness which cannot be surpassed. Were it not for the unwholesome diet, which I try to mend and manage, one might sleep to perfection here. Sleep, in fact, is one's best employment at

present. Before nine we are out, most of us, I eastward into a big portico that looks over lake and hillside towards the rising sun, where among the bushes I have a pipe lodged, which I light and smoke, sauntering up and down, joined by Jane if she can manage it, much to my satisfaction. Jane lodges some doors from me, also in two pretty rooms. Breakfast is at half-past nine, where are infinite flunkeys, cates, condiments—very superfluous to me, with much 'making of wits,' and not always a very great allowance of grave reason. That ends in about an hour. From that till two, I continue trying to keep private to my own room, but do not always succeed. To go down into the drawing-room is to get into the general whirl. After luncheon, all go for exercise, the women to drive, the men to ride.

The tide of guests ebbed and flowed and ebbed again; occasionally even the host and hostess were absent for a day or two, and the Carlyles were left alone 'in the vast establishment,' as 'in some Hall of the Past,' with horses, carriages, and all at their disposal. 'Strange quarters for the like of them!' he observed. He would not waste his time entirely, and used it to study the habits of the Hampshire peasantry, to amuse his mother with an account of them.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

The Grange: September 29, 1848.

The people here seem to me much less hardworked than in the North. They are very ill off, I believe, if their landlords did not help them; but seem to require much more to make them *well* off than Scotch people do. Their cottages are mostly very clean, with trees about them, flower-bushes into the very windows, and a trim road, paved with bricks,

leading out from them to the public way. The ploughmen, or farm-servants generally, go about girt in buckskin leggings from toe to midthigh, 'gey firm about the feet;' rags are seen nowhere, nor, I suppose, does *want* anywhere do other than come upon the parish and have itself supplied. The gentry, I imagine, take a great deal more pains with their dependents than ours do. For the rest the tillage is all more or less sluttish, thistles abounding, turnips sown broadcast, bad fences, abundance of waste ground, and, in particular, such a quantity of roads and foot and bridle paths as fills a Scotchman with astonishment. I do believe there is something like *ten* times as much ground occupied that way as there is with us. Nay, it seems virtually the rule, which I now act upon like the others, that you can *ride* in any direction whatsoever at your own pleasure, and nobody dreams of finding fault with you. There are walks and rides, green and red, I think twenty miles long, in the park, and solitary as if you were in the heart of America.

The motive which tempted Carlyle to linger so long in these scenes and return so often to them, is not very easy to find. It was certainly not the honour of the thing. He had a genuine regard for the Barings, and was indebted to them for a good deal of kindness; but neither regard nor gratitude required so constant a sacrifice. It was not pleasure, as is shown by the notes which were entered in his Journal.

October 16.—Returned Thursday gone a week from a long visit (five weeks all but a day) to the Grange. Plenty of high company there, coming and going; friendliness of all and sundry to us extreme. Feelings, nevertheless, altogether unfortunate, generally painful, and requiring to be kept *silent*. Idle I throughout as a dry bone; never spent five lonelier,

idler weeks. If not in their loneliness, there was no good in them at all. But it was notable what strange old *reminiscences* and secret elegiac thoughts of various kinds went on within me; wild and wondrous; from my earliest days even till then, in that new foreign element I had got into. Nor is there any *work* yet. Ah! no! none! What will become of me? I am growing old; I am grown old. My next book must be that of an old man, and I am not yet got into that dialect. Again and again I ask myself: Wilt thou never work more then? and the answer is a mere groan of misery, and also of cowardliness and laziness. Heaven help me! But how can *it* when I do not help myself?

He was trying to write something. He says in a letter at this time 'that he was doing a little every day, though to small purpose.' In the way of visible occupation I find only that he was reading Fichte, with small satisfaction, the 'Ich' and 'Nicht Ich' 'proving shadowy concerns.' John Carlyle amused him with a story of his mother, whose mode of treating impertinence seems to have been not unlike her son's.

Jack made us merry last night (he wrote to her in November) with that flat-soled hero-worshipper and your reception of him. 'The mother of Thomas Carlyle?' 'Yes.' 'Born where?' 'Ecclefechan.' He said no fastidious duchess could have done the poor blockhead better than you by the simple force of nature and practical desire to get rid of idle babble. Such people often enough come staggering about in here, and require to be managed in somewhat the same way.

Charles Buller had been at the party at the Grange, brilliant as usual. In this winter he suddenly died

through the blundering of an unskilful surgeon. Buller was one of the few real friends that Carlyle had left in the world, and was cut off in this sudden way just when the highest political distinctions were coming within his reach. His witty humour had for a time made his prospects doubtful. The House of Commons likes to be amused, but does not raise its jesters into Cabinets. Buller said he owed his success to Peel. He had been going on in his usual way one night when Peel said, 'If the honourable member for Liskeard will cease for a moment from making a buffoon of himself, I will, &c.' For these sharp words Buller was for ever grateful to Peel. He achieved afterwards the highest kind of Parliamentary reputation. A great career had opened before him, and now it was ended. Carlyle felt his loss deeply. He wrote a most beautiful elegy, which was published in the 'Examiner' in time for Buller's poor mother to read it. Then she died, too, of pure grief. Her husband had gone before, and the family with whom Carlyle had once been so intimately connected came to an end together. It was a sad season.

Journal.

December 14, 1848.—Surely a time will come for me once more! I understand this long while what the old romancers meant by a knight being enchanted. That is precisely my own condition—unable to stir myself, writhing with hand and foot glued together, under a load of contemptible miseries. Often, very often, I think, 'Would the human species universally be but so kind as to leave me altogether alone!' I mean to hurt nobody, I; and the hurt that others (invol-

untarily for most part) do me is incalculable. But these are shallow impatiences. The thought is froward and unjust. The good souls that still love me even while they hurt and distress me, can I wish them deliberately away from me? No, never! The fault, I discern, always will at length be found my own.

In certain conditions of bodily health the daintiest food is nauseous. It is the same, or nearly so, with the mind; and this perhaps may explain the impatient passage which follows. Yet he must have read again what he had written, and had not erased the words, which must be supposed therefore to represent his real opinion.

December 29, 1848.—It seems as if all things were combining against me to hinder any book or free deliverance of myself I might have in view at present. We shall see. Milnes has written this year a book on *Keats*. This remark to make on it: 'An attempt to make us eat dead dog by exquisite currying and cooking.' Won't eat it. A truly unwise little book. The kind of man that Keats was gets ever more horrible to me. Force of hunger for pleasure of every kind, and want of all other force—that is a combination! Such a structure of soul, it would once have been very evident, was a chosen 'Vessel of Hell;' and truly, for ever there is justice in that feeling. At present we try to love and pity, and even worship, such a soul, and find the task rather easy, in our own souls there being enough of similarity. Away with it! There is perhaps no clearer evidence of our universal *immorality* and cowardly untruth than even in such sympathies.

The winter went by with no work accomplished or

begun, beyond the revising 'Cromwell' for a third edition, as it was still selling rapidly. 'I find the book is well liked,' he could say, 'and silently making its way into the heart of the country, which is a result I am very thankful for.'

The book had been too well liked, indeed; for it had created a set of enthusiastic admirers who wanted now to have a statue of the great Protector, or, at least, some public memorial of him. Carlyle was of Cato's opinion in that matter. He preferred that men should rather ask where Oliver's statue was than see it as one of the anomalous images which are scattered over the metropolis. He was asked to give his sanction.

The people (he wrote to his mother) having subscribed 25,000*l.* for a memorial to an ugly bullock of a Hudson, who did not even pretend to have any merit except that of being suddenly rich, and who is now discovered to be little other than at heart a horse-coper and dishonest fellow, I think they ought to leave Cromwell alone of their memorials, and try to honour him in some more profitable way—by learning to be honest men like him, for example. But we shall see what comes of all this Cromwell work—a thing not without value either.

When he was least occupied his Notebook is fullest, throwing light into the inmost parts of him.

Journal.

April 26, 1849.—Little done hitherto—nothing definite done at all. What other book will follow? That is ever the question, and hitherto the unanswered one. Silent

hitherto, not from having nothing to say, but from having *all*—a whole world to say at once. I am weak too—forlorn, bewildered, and nigh *lost*—too weak for my place, I too. Article in the 'Spectator' about *Peel and Ireland;* very cruel upon Russell, commanding him to get about his business for ever. Was written very ill, but really to satisfy my conscience in some measure. . . . My voice sounds to me like a One Voice in the world, too frightful to me, with a heart so sick and a head growing grey! I say often *Was thut's? Be silent then!* all which I know is very weak. Louis Blanc was twice here—a pretty little miniature of a man, well shaped, long black head, brown skin; every way French aspect: quick, twinkling, earnest black eyes; a smallish, melodious voice, which rather quavers in its tones; free, lively, ingenious utterance, full of friendliness, transparency, logical definiteness, and seeming good faith; not much vanity either; a good little creature, to whom, deeply as I dissented from him, I could not help wishing heartily well. 'Literary world' (bless the mark!) much occupied of late with 'Macaulay's History,' the most popular history book ever written. Fourth edition already, within, perhaps, four months. Book to which four hundred editions could not lend any permanent value, there being no depth of sense in it at all, and a very great quantity of rhetorical wind and other temporary ingredients, which are the reverse of sense.

Pio Nono was not yet upon his throne again. Rome was held by the Triumvirs—Mazzini in brief triumph, and unable to believe that the glories of 1848 were absolutely to disappear. In Rome and Hungary the revolution was still struggling, though to most eyes the inevitable end had long been apparent. Carlyle had loved Mazzini well, but had never believed in him. He

was now watching his fortunes with anxious interest. His mother, he knew, would be pleased to hear of any brave man in death-grapple with the old Antichrist.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: May 1849.

Yesterday there came a certain Italian political character, one Marioni, who has come hither from Rome to negotiate about the poor Roman Republic and its many troubles. Mazzini had given him a card for Jane. I talked a long time with him; found him a rational, sincere-looking man. All people, he says, are clear against readmitting the Pope to temporal rule at Rome, and will fight violently before they be constrained to it. Nobody knows which way the French and others will settle that beggarly business, by impotence. To settle it well will exceed the power of all of them united, I believe. Mazzini, an old friend of ours, and one of the most zealous, pious-minded men I know, is one of the three Kings of Rome just now, and I suppose is the most resolute of them all. He lives in the Pope's palace at present. The other day he was in a poor house somewhere here, which seems a change when one reflects on it. Louis Napoleon, too, I have often seen in these streets driving his cabriolet; once I dined where he was, and talked a good deal to him—no great promotion for a man at that time. Alas! it is conjectured, too, that such a time may very easily return: that Louis Napoleon is very likely to drive cabriolets here again, poor fellow! The world is grown a much madder place than it ever was before. In fact, ruin has come upon all manner of supremely deceptive persons. The day of trouble for supreme quacks everywhere *has* arrived; for which should we not all thank the Righteous Judge?

Journal.

May 17, 1849.—Mazzini busy at Rome resisting the French, resisting all people that attack his 'Repubblica Romana,' standing on his guard against all the world. Poor Mazzini! If he *could* stand there in Rome, in sight of all Italy, and practically defy the whole world for a while, and fight till Rome was ashes and ruin, and end by blowing himself and his assailants up in the last strong post, and so yielding only with life, he might rouse the whole Italian nation into such a rage as it has not known for many centuries; and this might be the means of shaking out of the Italian mind a very foul precipitate indeed. Perhaps that is really what he was worth in this world. Strange, providential-looking, and leading to many thoughts—how, of all the immense nonsense that lay in this brave man, the one element of noble perennial truth that pervaded him wholly withal is at length laid hold of by the upper powers of this universe, and turned to the use that was in it. Whatsoever good we have, the gods know it well, and will know what to make of it in due season. Mazzini came much about us here for many years, patronised by my wife; to me very wearisome, with his incoherent Jacobinisms, George-Sandisms, in spite of all my love and regard for him: a beautiful little man, full of sensibilities, of melodies, of clear intelligence, and noble virtues. He had found Volney, &c., in a drawer in his father's library while a boy, and had read and read, recognising a whole new promised land illuminated with suns and volcanoes. Father was a physician in Genoa. He, forced to be a lawyer, turned himself into Young Italy, and, after many sad adventures, is *there*. What *will* become of him? we ask daily with a real interest. A small, square-headed, bright-eyed, swift, yet still, Ligurian figure; beautiful, and merciful, and fierce: as pretty a little man when I first saw

him, eight or nine years ago, as had ever come before me. True as steel, the word the thought of him pure and limpid as water; by nature a little lyrical poet; plenty of quiet fun in him, too, and wild emotion, rising to the *shrill* key, with all that lies between these two extremes. His trade, however, was not to write verses. Shall we ever see him more?

Under the same date in the Journal also is a notice of a contrasting figure—one of whom, as long as he had been successful, the English world had thought as well as it had thought ill of poor Mazzini.

King Hudson flung utterly prostrate, detected 'cooking accounts;' everybody kicking him through the mire. To me and to quiet onlookers he has not changed at all. He is merely detected to me what we always understood he was. The rage of fellow-gamblers, now when he has merely lost the game for them, and ceased to swindle with impunity, seems to us a very baseless thing. One sordid, hungry *canaille* are they all. Why should this, the chief terrier among them, be set upon by all the dog fraternity? One feels a real human pity for the ugly Hudson. T. Spedding the other night was describing to us the late figure of H.'s private life, as S. himself and others had observed it. Overwhelmed with business, yet superadding to it ostentatious and high-flown amusements, balls at great country houses fifty miles off, &c. &c. With early morning he was gone from Newby Park, and his guests, off by express trains over all the island; returned weary on the edge of dinner, then first met his guests, drank largely of champagne, with other wines; 'ate nothing at all, hardly an ounce of solid food; then tumbled into bed, worn out with business and madness. That was the late daily history of the man. Oh, Mammon! art thou not a hard god? It is now doubtful whether poor Hudson will even

have any money left. Perhaps that would be a real benefit to him. His brother-in-law has drowned himself at York. What a world this ever is! full of Nemesis, ruled by the Supernal, rebelled in by the Infernal, with prophetic tragedies as of old. Murderer Rush, Jermy's natural brother! To pious men, he too might have seemed one of the fated. No son of Atreus had more authentically a doom of the gods. The old laws are still alive. Even railway scrip is subject to them.

Ireland, of all the topics on which he had meditated writing, remained painfully fascinating. He had looked at the beggarly scene, he had seen the blighted fields, the ragged misery of the wretched race who were suffering for others' sins as well as for their own. Since that brief visit of his the famine had been followed by the famine-fever, and the flight of millions from a land which was smitten with a curse. Those ardent young men with whom he had dined at Dundrum were working as felons in the docks at Bermuda. Gavan Duffy, after a near escape from the same fate, had been a guest in Cheyne Row; and the story which he had to tell of cabins torn down by crowbars, and shivering families, turned out of their miserable homes, dying in the ditches by the road-side, had touched Carlyle to the very heart. He was furious at the economical commonplaces with which England was consoling itself. He regarded Ireland as 'the breaking-point of the huge suppuration which all British and all European society then was.' He determined to see it again, look at it further and more fully, 'that ragged body of a diseased soul,' and then write something about it which might

move his country into a better sense of its obligations. So earnest he was that he struggled seriously to find some plainer form of speech, better suited to the world's comprehension, which they might read, not to wonder at, but to take to their hearts for practical guidance.

Often in my sleep (he says) I have made long passages and screeds of composition in the most excellent approved commonplace style. I wish I could do it awake ; I could then write many things—fill all newspapers with my writing. The dream seems to say the talent is in me, as I suppose it sure enough to be ; but the *knack* is wanting, and will perhaps for ever be. All talents, specific aptitudes of a handicraft—nay, worse, all outlines of learning (so called), which I once had are gradually melting into the vague, and threatening to leave me—a wild sea surely, and a lonesome voyage surely ! 'Ware ahead !

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea : May 26, 1849.

We have beautiful warm weather now ; we are tolerably well in health, too, all of us. Both Jane and I go grumbling on as usual, not worse than usual. I am thinking rather seriously of getting out into the country as soon as the weather grows too hot. A tour of a week or two in Ireland has often been in my head of late ; some kind of tour which would take me away from the noise of this Babylon while the pavements are so hot and so crowded. . . . I do not expect to find much new knowledge in Ireland if I go ; but much that I have lying in me to say might perhaps get nearer to some way of utterance if I were looking face to face upon the ruin and wretchedness that is prevalent there ; for that seems to me the spot in our dominions where the *bottomless gulf* has broken out, and all

the lies and delusions that lie hidden and open in us have come to this definite and practical issue there. 'They that sow the wind, they shall reap the whirlwind;' that was from of old the law.

It was while Carlyle was preparing for this Irish tour that I myself became first personally acquainted with him. He had heard of me from Arthur Clough, who left Oxford when I left it. We had felt, both of us, that, thinking as we did, we were out of place in an Article-signing University, and we had resigned our Fellowships. Of Clough Carlyle had formed the very highest opinion, as no one who knew him could fail to do. His pure beautiful character, his genial humour, his perfect truthfulness, alike of heart and intellect—an integrity which had led him to sacrifice a distinguished position and brilliant prospects, and had brought him to London to gather a living as he could from under the hoofs of the horses in the streets—these together had recommended Clough to Carlyle as a diamond sifted out of the general rubbish-heap. Of me, with good reason, he was inclined to think far less favourably. I had written something, not wisely, in which heterodoxy was flavoured with the sentimentalism which he so intensely detested. He had said of me that I ought to burn my own smoke, and not trouble other people's nostrils with it. Nevertheless, he was willing to see what I was like. James Spedding took me down to Cheyne Row one evening in the middle of June. We found him sitting after dinner, with his pipe, in the small flagged court between the house and the garden. He was studying without much satisfaction the Life of

St. Patrick by Jocelyn of Ferns in the 'Acta Sanctorum.' He was trying to form a notion of what Ireland had been like before Danes or Saxons had meddled with it, when it was said to have been the chosen home of learning and piety, and had sent out missionaries to convert Northern Europe. His author was not assisting him. The Life of St. Patrick as given by Jocelyn is as much a biography of a real man as the story of Jack the Giant-killer. When we arrived Carlyle had just been reading how an Irish marauder had stolen a goat and eaten it, and the Saint had convicted him by making the goat bleat in his stomach. He spoke of it with rough disgust; and then we talked of Ireland generally, of which I had some local knowledge.

He was then fifty-four years old; tall (about five feet eleven), thin, but at that time upright, with no signs of the later stoop. His body was angular, his face beardless, such as it is represented in Woolner's medallion, which is by far the best likeness of him in the days of his strength. His head was extremely long, with the chin thrust forward; the neck was thin; the mouth firmly closed, the under lip slightly projecting; the hair grizzled and thick and bushy. His eyes which grew lighter with age, were then of a deep violet, with fire burning at the bottom of them, which flashed out at the least excitement. The face was altogether most striking, most impressive every way. And I did not admire him the less because he treated me—I cannot say unkindly, but shortly and sternly. I saw then what I saw ever after—that no one need look for conventional politeness from Carlyle—he would hear the exact truth from him, and nothing else

We went afterwards into the dining-room, where Mrs. Carlyle gave us tea. Her features were not regular, but I thought I had never seen a more interesting-looking woman. Her hair was raven black, her eyes dark, soft, sad, with dangerous light in them. Carlyle's talk was rich, full, and scornful; hers delicately mocking. She was fond of Spedding, and kept up a quick, sparkling conversation with him, telling stories at her husband's expense, at which he laughed himself as heartily as we did.

It struck me then, and I found always afterwards, that false sentiment, insincerity, cant of any kind would find no quarter, either from wife or husband; and that one must speak truth only, and, if possible, think truth only, if one wished to be admitted into that house on terms of friendship. They told me that I might come again. I did not then live in London, and had few opportunities; but if the chance offered, I never missed it.

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